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Beyond the bell: young adult former instrumental music student non-participation in community band or orchestra

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Dissertation

BEYOND THE BELL:

YOUNG ADULT FORMER INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC STUDENT NON-PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY BAND OR ORCHESTRA

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my father, Jack Burch, M.A.

and to my wife, Geralyn J. Freeland, Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

There is a wealth of literature on people who participate in community instrumental ensembles. Studies exist regarding demographics, educational level, socio-economic status, music education experience, and musical self-identities of community music participants. Far less study focuses on young adults who were successful in high school programs but chose not to continue playing in a community instrumental ensemble group after the end of formal schooling. Traditional assumptions about their reasons—job and family for example—need to be examined. Attribution Theory, which provides a means of analyzing motivation for choices as well as perceived attributions for success or failure, was the theoretical framework of this research, with focus group interviews as the main procedural methodology. The geographic area of the study was limited to the greater Los Angeles area of southern California.

Music education literature is replete with references to building skills and values for lifelong participation in music, whether in performance, in listening, or in engaging with music in other ways. This study will offer insight into why many young adults who were once in high school music choose not to continue in instrumental music

performance beyond their high school years. I anticipate that this research may lead to better understanding of issues in young adult stages of life as they relate to choices about non-participation in community instrumental ensembles. This research suggests ways in which school music education can facilitate lifelong engagement with music, and will suggest how community ensembles might make changes that will broaden participation by a greater number of young adults after they leave school.

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CHAPTER ONE: EXPLORING THE LANDSCAPE

Context of This Study

Music education literature, from the middle of the 20th century to the first decade of the 21st century, is replete with references to building skills and values for lifelong participation in music, whether in performance, in listening, or in engaging with music in other ways (Abeles, Hoffer, & Klotman, 1984; Alperson, 1991; Elliott, 1995; Jones, 2005, 2009; Leonhard & House, 1959; Mantie & Tucker, 2008; Regelski, 2004; Reimer, 1970; Westbury, 2002; Williams, 2007). From the mid-twentieth century this often included performance in some sort of adult community band or orchestra, modeled on what was found in the local public school (Brandenburg, 1946; Haas, 1952; Lawrence & Dachinger, 1967; Pitts, 1958; Rea, 1956; Sherburn, 1949). Although this aspect of continuing music participation was certainly not the only, nor even the most important outcome of school music education, it has nevertheless been a significant part of the overall picture.

Given the large amount of resources, time, and talent expended in traditional ensembles of band, orchestra, jazz band, and choir (Abril & Gault, 2008), and the benefits that come from music participation, it is nevertheless the exception rather than the rule that young adults continue performing beyond their school years (Arasi, 2006; Bowles, Dobbs, & Jensen, 2014; Jorgensen, 2003). Regelski (2013) summed up the current situation succinctly:

> Thus, despite the seemingly high levels of excellence of many school ensembles, the overwhelming majority of high school musicians do not make music one of their adult 'social realities' after graduation. Their musical 'activities' in school ensembles fail to promote compelling dispositions or default settings (intentionality) for musicing in their adult lives. (p. 11)

The thread of this idea continued to the end of the 20th century. In the Housewright Symposium on the future of music education Yarbrough (1999) wrote: "Teaching must include not only musical concepts and skills, but also how those concepts and skills can function for us through our lifetime" (p.7). Since that time there have been tremendous cultural changes and challenges (such as 9/11, social networking, and smart phones) that were not widely anticipated prior to that time. Lifelong participation (both in terms of performance and other ways of musical engagement) continues to be highly valued in music education thought and practice into the 21st century (Aspin, 2000; Bryce, 2004; Cavit, 2005; Faivre-Ransom, 2001; Jellison, 2004; Myers, 2008; Pearsall, 2009).

Since the Housewright Symposium there has been a subtle but important shift in thinking among many influential music education theorists. The ideas regarding lifelong *participation* (as more significant than "simply" lifelong *learning*, see Mantie, 2012), and lifelong engagement with music are still vitally important issues, but there is less emphasis on participation in community ensembles that mirror large school ensembles, such as orchestra, concert band, and jazz band. One possible reason for this might be the potential conflict between school participation and community participation. A school performance class has elements that are not usually part of a community ensemble, such as grades, written assignments, quizzes, tests, and other practices associated with an academic setting. By contrast, the community music group usually incorporates none of these things, focusing primarily on performance. Students who want to enjoy performing music might simply join a community music group rather than participate in the school music program. This can have the unintended consequence of the student not benefitting

from the much broader knowledge and experience that can only be gained in a well-rounded, all-encompassing music education program. To address this concern the National Association for Music Education (NAfME, 2015) has a set of guidelines for school music teachers and for community music directors. Among these guidelines is the need for community ensembles to not admit high school students into their ensembles unless they are also part of their school performance group. This guideline is released if the school does not offer a performance class for the student. I believe this practice needs to be standard procedure with community bands. It would give assurance to school music teachers that their star players will not abandon the school program. Flexibility is called for however, among community music leaders and school teachers. If there is a community music group that has no counterpart in the school (for example, a bluegrass fiddle jam session, hip-hop open mic night, gamelan orchestra) the school teacher should become familiar with community music opportunities in the neighborhood, and encourage students that might want to participate. The ultimate priority should be the needs of the student, more so than the needs of the school music teacher.

Additionally, there is increasing recognition that the act of recreating a junior version of the symphony orchestra or symphonic wind ensemble leaves out a significant population of students who have a high interest in music, but have little interest in the type of music used in many school performance ensembles. Jones (2005) calls this an example of "curricular myopia." Jones says:

> "We continue to offer essentially the same kinds of music classes and produce the same kinds of music teachers we have since the mid-20th Century and exclude musicians who have different abilities, interest, and ideas from entering the [music teaching] profession" (p. 1).

Students who played in traditional school ensembles, who go through college (playing in the same kinds of groups), and then become music teachers themselves, thus carry on the same mid-20th century traditions which in turn leave out many potential new students.

In a presentation at the National Symposium on Music Teacher Education (presented by NAfME) Kratus (2009) presented the parallels between 19th-century music conservatory practices and modern conservatory practices, noting that there has been little change. The current requirements of applied lessons on a wind or string instrument, participation in major ensembles, the study of classical music theory, conducting, and instrument-specific pedagogy leave out many of the elements which a 21st century young adult may want to use on leaving high school or college. Kratus suggested that music educators find ways to involve students in participation in smaller ensembles, making music in a variety of styles, without a conductor, encouraging participants' artistic decision-making, and making use of current technology for creating and disseminating music.

The situation still persists that school music programs often leave out the skills needed for meaningful engagement with music beyond the high school years (Mantie & Tucker, 2008; Myers, 2008, Regelski, 2013). Examples of some of these skills might include improvisation, composing, arranging, creating and distributing music on the Internet, computer music skills, recording live music, recording music using Music Instrument Digital interface (MIDI), using digital audio workstations, using computer notation programs, and using music applications designed for digital tablets.

This by no means implies that there is no longer an important place for traditional ensembles in the school music education program. As has been noted previously in this chapter, the majority of school music resources continue to go into these types of performance ensembles. Without a concerted effort on the part of those involved in music education training in American colleges and universities, this situation is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. Large ensembles in the traditional sense continue to play a major role in American high school music programs. For that reason, this study is focused on musicians who were part of a high school traditional performance group and are not playing in a community music ensemble. These former players provide an accessible and clearly defined sample, with connections to established networks of school music programs. Nevertheless, it is appropriate that alternative cultural ensembles will be considered in the conclusions and implications.

There is no commonly accepted term in the music education literature for musicians who performed in a school music ensemble while in high school but now no longer play music. Therefore, for the purposes of this study I use the term *non-performers*.

If music educators wish to encourage lifelong performance among young adults beyond their school years, we need to know about the experiences of people who were participating in a high school band, orchestra, or jazz band, but chose not to continue making music in a community music group as adults. An understanding of the factors of young adult lives that encourage or discourage continued music performance will help scholars and teachers better understand how to support a lifetime of music engagement and participation. We also need to understand the ways in which these so-called non-

performers still engage with music in their lives, so that we can learn what aspects of music education might encourage lifelong participation in a variety of ways. This must ultimately include experiences that are unrelated to traditional community band or community orchestra performance, and which are accessible to populations of various cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Southern California Background Information

The term "community music" covers a broad area of musical activities and experiences. There are community music groups for ukuleles, drums circles, church choirs, rock bands, DJ's, Mariachi bands, classical guitar ensembles, samba bands, fiddle groups, tuba ensembles, bagpipes, blues jam sessions, drumlines, open-mic nights, and a variety of others. In some of these communities there is a connection between community music groups and school music, while less so in others. One small part of the larger community music scene is that of the traditional band, orchestra, and choir that have similarities to their counterparts in the school system.

One of the issues regarding community instrumental ensembles such as bands and orchestras is their place within the broader context of the community music scene. What values of the broader world of "community music" are missing from traditional community groups? Some of those values include emphasis on diversity of musics and participants, inclusion of marginalized and disenfranchised individuals and groups, active participation in creating and improvising, commitment to participants' social and personal growth, and the role of music in advancing social justice (Higgins, 2012). To what extent are those values being nurtured in traditional groups? How can those values

evolve within traditional groups? From another perspective, what can non-traditional community groups learn from the traditional ones? What is the proper and mutually beneficial connection between school music and traditional as well as non-traditional community music groups?

Higgins (2012) pointed out an important difference between the United Kingdom and the United States in the use and understanding of "community music" and its relation to school music. According to Higgins school music in Great Britain has benefitted from a broadening acceptance of non-traditional community music groups, while these community groups have gained from their connections to the schools. The same has not been universally true in the United States.

> Over the last three decades there has been a steady increase in the interaction between community music and schools. This has fostered mutual respect: community musicians have gained exposure to the pedagogical process and learned a range of approaches to evaluation, while school music teachers have been exposed to a greater variety of musics and different processes of music making. This is not the same in the United States, where much of the current music education system has been dominated by three traditions; band, orchestra, and choir. (p. 117)

Even though many United States schools offer some non-traditional types of music classes, band and (to a lesser extent) orchestra continue to be the dominant expression of public school instrumental music in America (Abril & Gault, 2008). There is, however, only a slight connection between traditional school groups and traditional community groups. The Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association (SCSBOA, 2011) has over 1,000 members, most of whom are teachers in middle schools and high schools. In that organization there are about 675 high schools listed. The

membership directory shows that most of those schools have two or more performing classes, such as marching bands, orchestras, jazz bands, and concert bands. The directory also shows that many of them have other types of instrumental performing classes (e.g., guitar ensembles, Mariachi bands). If there are a minimum of two performing classes at each school this means there are probably around 1,350 instrumental music performance classes in southern California high schools. The website of the California Department of Education (cde.ca.gov) indicates that the average class size of secondary school concert band and orchestra classes was 39.9 students in the Los Angeles Unified School District from 1997 to 2009. Although there are many other school districts in southern California, the Los Angeles district is the largest. That average class size may or may not be representative of other southern California districts, but I can also provide some personal insight.

As a judge for the Los Angeles Unified School District music festivals for the past eight years I have observed that most performing groups (concert bands and orchestras) have between 40 and 60 students, with some having as few as 20 and several having over 80. This would mean, even with conservative estimates, that there are between 40,000 and 47,000 high school students involved in instrumental music performing classes in approximately 675 high schools (with at least two performing classes per school) in the southern California area. Based on these numbers it is not unreasonable to estimate that over 200,000 students were involved in high school music performance in southern California over the past 20 years.

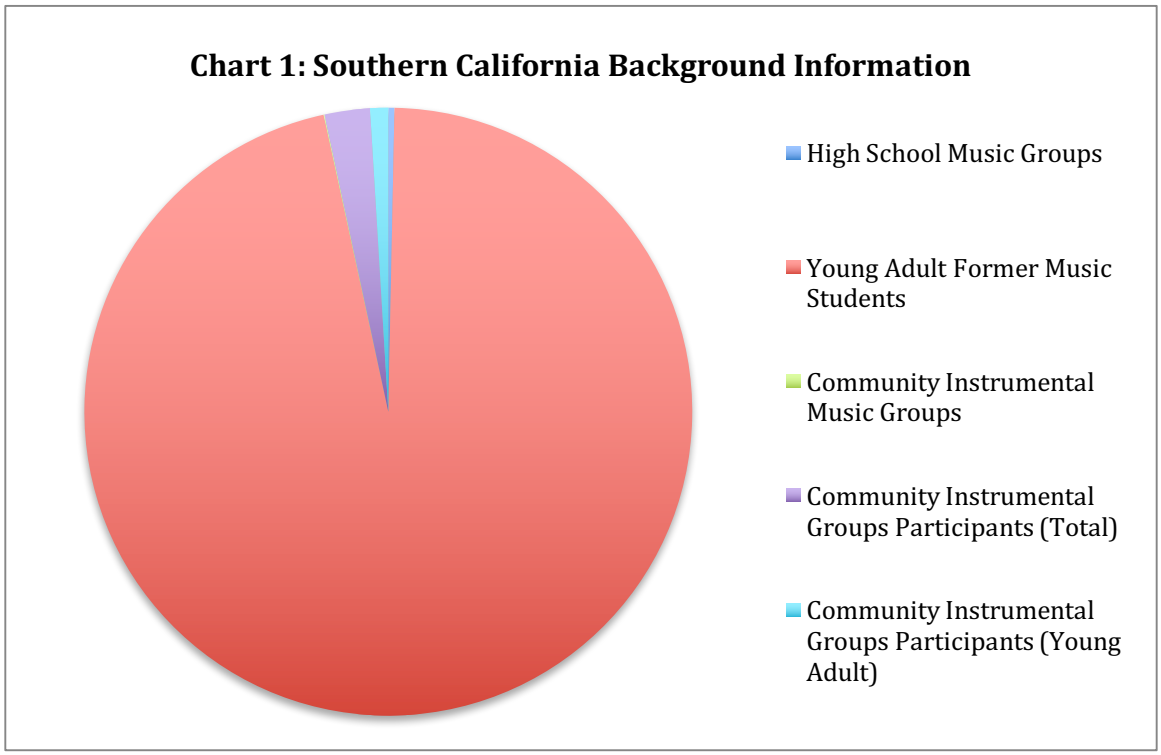
What are the numbers of young adult, former high school music students who are

currently playing in a community orchestra or band? The Association of Community Bands (2013) lists about 43 community bands and orchestras in the southern California area. In addition, there are 46 community colleges in southern California with at least one performing group (usually band, jazz band, or orchestra) open to members of the community. Taken together, this provides a picture of at least 80 community bands or orchestras in the southern California area. According to the Association of Concert Bands, the average size of community instrumental music groups is about 45 to 50 members (http://www.acbands.org). This number indicates that there may be around 3,200 to 4,000 players in community instrumental music groups in southern California. Studies generally show that about a quarter to a third of the players fall within the young adult (age 18–36) category (Bowen, 1995; Busch, 2005; Heintzelman, 1998; Mantie, 2012; Patterson, 1985; Spencer, 1996).

There may be approximately 1,000 to 1,400 young adult former high school players currently participating in a community band or orchestra in southern California, or about 0.5% to 0.7% of students who played in high school. These estimates are based on a combination of available data and my own observations. They are intended to show an overall picture rather than a precise number. The overall picture shows that there may be many thousands of former high school students who have the ability and experience to play in a community music group, by virtue of their high school experience, but who choose not to do so.

There appears, therefore, to be a lack of connection between the school music experience and young adults' post-school involvement in community instrumental music

groups. The chart below is a visual representation of this background information.



There might be a number of reasons for this disparity and for the choices young adults make about community music participation. Many assume job and family responsibilities are the main factors. Choices could also be related to students' school and/or non-school music experiences (either positive or negative). A positive experience, in which a student enjoyed an active, fully integrated music program, with highly developed social cohesion might make the local community band look dull and uninteresting by comparison. Conversely, a negative experience might forestall a graduated high school student from seeking out musical involvement after the high school years. Lack of interest in the style of music played by community bands or orchestras, lack of social connections in a community music group, a perceived lack of

opportunities for post-high school performance, time commitments, or financial considerations might also be attributions for non-participation.

As there are many other valid ways of engaging with music outside of community music performance, there may be no need to challenge or question the existing situation. People who feel the need to be involved in a performance group can do so. Leglar and Smith (1996/2010) maintained that community bands, orchestras, and choruses can be found in just about any North American community with a population of at least 60,000. Many smaller communities may also have community music groups but there is little data on this. The Association of Concert Bands website (http://www.acbands.org) lists over 1,600 community bands and orchestras in its community music link. There is, some might argue, little need to be concerned about whether more students continue in such groups after formal schooling. It is of small consequence when students do not continue playing because they have many other valid ways of engaging with music. It would therefore be a mistake to maintain that music education has "failed" if more students do not continue playing in the same kinds of ensembles in which they played while in high school. The students performed while in school and then moved on to other things.

Whereas this viewpoint has merit, I believe it is incomplete for the simple reason that participation in music performance offers a unique way of engaging with music. As Csikszentmihayli (1990) pointed out, when it comes to music, the playing of music offers a kind of *flow* experience, because of the connection between challenge and skill. A given challenge (i.e., playing a piece of music) that is commensurate with a person's level of skill results in a state of mind in which the participant is completely absorbed. If the

music is too challenging (beyond the participant's skill level) the result is anxiety. If the music is too easy the result is boredom.

Tsugawa (2010) added that in the group setting, the sonic properties of large ensembles create a "power and excitement that becomes a primary motivator of participation" (p. 111). Additionally, playing music in a group includes the benefits of performing music meant to be played by a group, as well as the social, educational, and musical self-esteem benefits of community music (Lawrence & Dachinger, 1967; Larson, 1982; Koopman, 1995; Mark, 1996; LeCroy, 1998; McCrary, 2001; Kruse, 2014).

In this research I proactively explore issues in the lives of young adults that discourage community music participation. Faced with responsibilities and tasks of completing education, beginning a career, establishing a family, and expanding a social circle (Havighurst, 1972), young adults must make choices. To what do young adults attribute their choices regarding participation? This is the question that drives the research for this dissertation.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory focuses on the process by which individuals arrive at subjective explanations for actions and events. Orbuch (1997) wrote that peoples' accounts are packages of attributions, including causality, responsibility, blame, and trait ascriptions to oneself or to others. In this way peoples' accounts of choices made and the processes that lead to those choices are the keys to understanding those choices. By coding free response reactions to an event it is possible to reveal meaning-making. Accounts are story-like constructions by which individuals create and organize meaning from their

social world. Orbuch also pointed out that an account is similar to a narrative, but also different in an important aspect. Like an account Orbuch sees a narrative as a story-like construction. In a narrative there is a focus on the temporal sequence. In an account the temporal sequence is also important, but the focus is on the intrinsic and extrinsic factors in which the account takes place. Orbuch maintained that the use of accounts, with its emphasis on causality, can be useful in empirical research. According to Orbuch, scholars have begun to "appreciate more fully the value of examining attributions within the context of natural stories that people tell about their lives" (p. 464). This study focuses more on accounts rather than narratives.

Information on why former high school student musicians no longer play in their young adult years might help teachers reflect on practices that lead to this outcome; practices that may be steeped in the grand tradition of wind and string pedagogy, but have little relevance to the broader world of community music. For example, a trumpet student who has learned to play standard high school wind ensemble repertoire might have little understanding of how to jam with a garage band or fit into a community Mariachi band. From that reflection may come actions that lead to a more fully inclusive approach to music education that results in a broader expansion of post-school music engagement.

Attribution Theory and Young Adults

The period of young adulthood (18–36) is that period which Erikson and Smesler (1980) refer to as "intimacy vs. isolation," a time of rapid change during which young adults are dealing with issues of career building and/or higher education, of seeking attachments in expanding social circles, and of establishing families. In any kind of

framework dealing with differences in people there is the risk of setting unrealistic age-group boundaries. According to Levinson (1986) "early adulthood" goes from 17 to 45, with a transition period from 17 to 22 and 40 to 45. For the purposes of my research I used Erikson's more limited span of 18–36, with the understanding that some "young adult" characteristics can easily have a three- to five-year window at either end of the spectrum.

The pressures of young adult life juxtaposed with the investment of time and resources expended in developing performance skills in childhood and teenage years results in the seemingly incongruous situation in which people who are capable and perhaps interested in community music performance are least able to make it part of their lives. Eliason, Mortimer, and Vuolo (2015) maintained that there are multiple paths in the transition to adulthood, depending upon choices and circumstance. They charted five different "Life Path Schemas" and typical outcomes: 1) Traditional school-to-work, negligible family formation, 2) Early parent, no partner, 3) Traditional school-to-work, delayed family formation, 4) Traditional school-to-work, on-time family formation (in mid 20's), 5) Early parent, partner, full-time worker. Not surprisingly, these different life schemas resulted in vastly different results during young adulthood. Miller (2002) said that Erickson's work continues to be relevant in theories of developmental psychology; "Erickson's version of development seems well grounded in the everyday lives of the majority of people, as they struggle to find meaning and coherence in their lives" (p. 160).

Roisman, Masten, Coatsworth, and Tellegen (2004) included the domains of competence in friendship, academic conduct, and romance in their study of young adult

tasks, which have features in common with Erickson and Havighurst. Using Erikson's model Havighurst (1972) spelled out what he labeled as the *tasks* of the American young adult. These tasks include selecting (and learning to live with) a mate or partner, starting a family, rearing children, managing a home, getting started in an occupation, taking civic responsibility, and finding a congenial social group. These young adult tasks have social and financial implications that impact choices in all areas of life, including leisure time and personal fulfillment activities. Even with the challenge of limited personal time young adults are aware of the need for leisure pursuits that they find self-fulfilling. Verduin and McEwen (1984) wrote that the focus of this stage of young adulthood is self-awareness, social interaction, and decision-making that takes into account varied levels of flexibility in personal leisure choices. In this period of stress young adults can be at a higher state of awareness of how their choices of lifestyle will affect their own personal goals. Attribution Theory provides a window into the reasons for choices they make.

Study Rationale

Whereas music education literature places a high value on non-performance aspects of musical engagement, continued involvement in performance remains a lifelong value that music education theorists assert. According to Stebbins (1996) music performance as "serious leisure" has the benefits of self-actualization, self-enrichment, self-expression, self-renewal, feelings of accomplishment, enhancement of self-image, attractive social interaction and group membership. Even in the *aesthetic* (Reimer, 1970, 2003) versus *praxial* (Elliott, 1995) debate among music education theorists, both sides

agree that playing music has an important place in music education. Csikszentmihayli (1990) wrote of the "flow" experienced through music performance, something that occurs when a person is engaged in a task that is challenging, yet achievable. High school music students often have this type of "flow" experience while in a performance setting, but do not readily find the same opportunity for performance beyond their formal schooling years. The rationale for this study lies in the need to understand the issues of young adult life that result in young adult choices not to participate in community music instrumental groups. These issues could be related to current life situations, and could also include school music experiences, whether negative or positive.

Study Objective

There have been several studies on the adult participants of community music groups (Bowen, 1995; Busch, 2005; Heintzelman, 1998; Mantie, 2012; Patterson, 1985; Spencer, 1996) indicating that the participants tend to be upper middle class, White, well-educated, married with children, over 45 years old, and physically healthy. There has been, however, very little study on the much larger group of adult *non-participants*, who were members of band or orchestra while in high school. Who are these non-participants? What prevents them from playing post graduation? The estimated number of over 200,000 young adult potential players in southern California not involved in community music (see pages 4–5 above) makes this an important question to be addressed. The objective of this study was to apply Attribution Theory to the responses of young adult, former high school music students regarding reasons for choices about non-participation in community music groups. Simply stated, I wanted to learn the reasons for young adult

choices to withdraw from music performance as a part of their lives.

Definitions and Limitations

First, this research centered on young adults who have the option of choosing participation in an instrumental performance group. Although the focus of this research was on participation in instrumental performance groups (limited to community band, orchestra, or jazz band) there was no implication that participation in vocal music or music using other instruments (such as guitars, drum sets, bagpipes, etc.) is somehow less valuable than participation in the more traditional ensembles, or that there are not many other important ways to engage in music outside of performance. Nevertheless, given the fact that significant public school music education resources go into these types of ensembles (Abril & Gault, 2008), I directed my attention to the kinds of ensembles in the community that more closely resemble traditional performance ensembles in the schools.

Secondly, there is a specific meaning of the term "community music" that I used in this research. As evidenced by the existence of the *International Journal of Community Music* (*IJCM*) there are many forms that the idea of "community music" can take around the world (Bowman, 2009; Veblen, 2008; Veblen & Olsson, 2002). The editorial of the initial volume of the *IJCM* called for a much broader understanding of what is meant worldwide by the idea of community music; an idea that includes, but goes far beyond, music-making outside of educational institutions or partnerships between schools and professional music establishments (Elliot, Higgins, & Veblen, 2008). The natures and values of community music groups are as varied as the participants and the communities in which they exist, including the institutions related to a musical endeavor, the needs of

the community, the aims and purposes of a given program or group, the specific local sociological, economic, geographical, and religious characteristics, and the financial support for a given community music organization.

Veblen & Olsen (2002) gave just a few of the many possible forms of community music. In addition to the traditional organizations such as church choirs, brass bands, and local orchestras, there are sing-alongs at senior centers, ethnic celebrations, youth bands, adult barbershop quartets, doo-whop singing, Internet users, chat rooms, coffeehouses, barn dances, recorder ensembles, local jazz groups, and private music studios. Community music crosses racial, social, economic, age, and ethnic boundaries, bridges institutional and grassroots organizations, and encompasses local as well as global characteristics. Veblen (2008) suggested that community music be considered in relation to the five issues of: 1) the kinds of music and music-making involved, 2) the intentions of the leaders and participants, 3) characteristics of participants, 4) interactions among teaching-learning aims, knowledge, and strategies, and 5) interplays between formal and informal contexts. Community music worldwide is therefore vibrant and diverse.

Leglar and Smith (1996/2010) offer three general categories of the term "community music" as it is employed in the United States: (1) groups with an educational objective, (2) groups with a performance objective, and (3) groups that engage in cultural transmission. The boundaries between these groups are permeable rather than strictly defined. Each of these general categories may also have characteristics of the other categories. This is a small part of what Coffman and Higgins (2011) call "community music as an active intervention between a music leader or leaders and participants," in the

sense that the groups have a recognized leader (usually a conductor) and participants. Because of the extensive ways in which community groups engage with music, it was necessary to limit my research to examine specifically the effects of current music education on post-school participation. In this research I limited my use of the term "community music" to refer to United States non-professional (as opposed to professional or semi-professional) community-based bands, orchestras, or jazz bands that resemble their counterparts in public schools.

Because this research was geographically limited to the greater Los Angeles area, there is the question of whether to include Mariachi music groups along with the traditional groups of band, orchestra, and jazz band. However, because Mariachi groups are more representative of Leglar and Smith's third general category of "cultural transmission," (1996/2010) the present study was confined to the more traditional ensembles of orchestra, band, and jazz band. This represented a limitation of what may rightfully be referred to as "community music," in that there are many other ways in which people can make, listen to, or otherwise engage with music in a community setting. Informal open-mic nights, bluegrass jam sessions, singing in a church choir, participating in a ukulele group, writing and sharing songs using Garageband, and collaborating with others on Internet sites to create and make music are just a few of the ways that people engage with music that have nothing to do with traditional forms of making music. This limitation (of focusing on traditional community instrumental music groups) was not meant to imply that other forms of community music are not valid or meaningful.

Research Questions

The specific research questions addressed in this study are:

1. To what do young adult former high school music students attribute choices not to participate in community music?

2. Within the context of young adult *tasks,* how would the choices of young adult life be supported or constrained by participation in community music?

Summary

Although some young adults make the commitment of time, money, and effort to participate in a community music group, many others who enjoyed music performance as students do not make that decision as they enter their adult years. To what do young adults attribute choices about non-participation in community instrumental music? Do they attribute them to school experience, to the style of music played, to social, work, and family obligations, to fear of auditions, doubts about musical self-efficacy, and reluctance to take on an on-going time commitment? Using Attribution Theory as a framework in this study I explored self-reported attributions for choices of young adults for non-participation in community music, with the objective of understanding and reporting on young adults' aspirations for meaningful musical engagement.

CHAPTER TWO: EXAMINING THE LITERATURE

There is an extensive body of research on the characteristics of individuals involved in community performance groups (Baranski, 2011; Bowen, 1995; Busch, 2005; Chiodo, 1997; Heintzelman, 1988; Mantie, 2012; Matthews & Kitsantas, 2007; McCrary, 2001). In addition, there are many studies of student attrition from music classes from one school level to the next (Arnwine, 1996; Clothier, 1967; Delano & Royce, 1987; Faber, 2010; Frakes, 1984; McClarty, 1968; McDavid, 1999; Mountford, 1997; Rhyneer, 2002; Solly, 1986; Stewart, 2007). A survey by the National Endowment for the Arts (2003) found that the percentages of adults creating or performing music at least once a month during a 12-month period fell significantly from 1992 to 2002 in the categories of jazz (1.7 to 1.3), classical music (4.2 to 1.8), and choir (6.3 to 4.8). A follow-up survey in 2008 found that performance in classical music surged from 1.8% to 3.0%, an increase of 67% (NEA, 2009). Percentages in other areas remained constant during the same period. One possible reason for the increase in classical music performance may be due to groups that cater primarily to older individuals such as the New Horizons bands and orchestras that have sprung up around the country in the last two decades (Coffman & Levy, 1997). The New Horizons band and orchestra movement was started by Dr. Roy Ernst, of the Eastman School of Music, for the purpose of providing older and retired adults the opportunity to play in a community band or orchestra. Even with an increase in classical music performance, the percentage of adults in such groups is still very small (3%), much smaller than the percentage of students involved in school performance groups.

One approach employed in some of this research is Attribution Theory, which provides a process for exploring rationale for choices. In the literature, however, little attention has been focused on young adult, former high school music students who choose not to continue in music performance beyond their high school years.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory provides a means of analyzing motivation for choices as well as perceived attributions for success or failure (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1974, 1985; Kelley & Michela, 1980; Malle, 1999). What a person attributes to be the cause of success or failure at a task might support future actions regarding the same or similar task. One who believes that success is due to diligent effort, for example, will be more likely to employ diligent effort at a task than one who believes that success was the result of luck. There are four major categories of attributions for success or failure at a task (Weiner, 1972). Traditionally, these are labeled *Ability, Task Difficulty, Luck,* and *Effort*. According to Attribution Theory *Ability* and *Effort* are internal; *Task Difficulty* and *Luck* are external. *Ability* and *Task Difficulty* are stable; that is, they are not subject to change. *Luck* and *Effort* are unstable; that is, they may change at any moment. A person who attributes success to the unstable/external cause of *Luck* is less likely to put diligent effort into a task. By contrast a person who attributes success to an internal/unstable cause of *Effort* is more likely to apply diligent practice to achieve success. Someone attributing success to the internal/stable cause of *Ability* is less likely to practice diligently if he believes his skill alone will carry him through. Attributing success or failure to the external/stable cause of *Task Difficulty* may give up on the task when the task is perceived to demand

ability or effort beyond a person's skills or commitment (Asmus & Harrison, 1990; Legette, 1998, 2012). Weiner (1979) also added another dimension to his concept of attribution theory, the element of *Controllability,* the extent to which causes are controllable or uncontrollable by the individual.

Attribution Theory encompasses more than attributions for success or failure. It also involves self-described reasons for choices and actions. In addition to the four categories listed above (*Ability, Task Difficulty, Luck,* and *Effort*) Malle (1999) distinguished two major modes of explanation for behavior: *reason* explanation and *cause* explanation. *Reason* explanations refer to intentional behavior, whereas *cause* explanations refer to unintentional behavior. Intentional behavior is that which a person chooses based on internal concept of self, whereas unintentional behavior results from external factors. In this context *unintentional* does not mean *accidental*. When applied to the present study these concepts might be presented as explanations for dropping out of music at the collegiate level. A *reason* explanation (or attribution) could be a person's concern about the audition process. ("I could do it but they probably wouldn't pass me anyway.") A *cause* explanation could be scheduling conflicts. Malle further delineated linguistic features of reason explanations. One feature is that reasons appear as beliefs and/or desires. ("I believe my skills might or might not be good enough to play in the band." Or "I want my skills to be good enough.") In general, *reason* explanations come from the inner world of a subject (thoughts, opinions, feelings, hopes, beliefs), and *cause* explanations come from a subject's outer environment (social circle, work, family, neighborhood). In this way Attribution Theory also clarifies some aspects of choices

about socialization and music performance. As will be seen in the data analysis chapter, socialization (*cause* explanation) was a major factor in participants' choices for joining and returning to music performance classes while in high school.

Attribution Theory includes the various causes (intrinsic and extrinsic) that people assign to behavior (Heider, 1958; Malle, 1999) and the reasons (external and internal) that people attribute to success or failure in various settings, such as sports or academic endeavors (Weiner, 1974, 1985). It has been used in both quantitative and qualitative research (Kelley & Michela, 1980). As a theoretical framework in music-related research, Attribution Theory was used in studying motivation and achievement (Austin, 1988; Asmus & Harrison, 1990; Kvet & Watkins, 1993; Parkes & Jones, 2012; Schmidt, 2005), as well as choices about participation (Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Kinney, 2010; Nierman & Veak, 1997). Asmus (1986) wrote that in attribution theory, a student's attribution of success or failure in music determines the actions that a student takes in approaching a task. A student who attributes success to practice (*Effort*, internal/unstable) will be more likely to stay with a challenging passage than a student who attributes success in music to *Luck* or *Ability*. Legette (1998) studied 1,114 public school music students' beliefs about success and failure in music. Variables given were effort, background, class environment, ability, and affect for music. Legette's results showed that students collectively placed more emphasis on ability and effort than on other factors. Legette maintained that teachers can serve their students better by focusing on the internal/unstable cause of effort. This aspect of Attribution Theory (the perceived reasons for success or failure) is informative for the present study. One reason that students drop

out of music from one level to the next (e.g., high school to college) has to do with fear of auditioning and concern about the difficulty level of the repertoire and anxiety about an audition (Delano & Royce, 1987; Frakes, 1984; Lawrence & Dachinger, 1967; McDavid, 1999; Solly, 1986; Stewart, 2007; Waggoner, 1971). This also may be part of the picture of young adult non-participation.

Attribution Theory has been used in quantitative studies as well as qualitative. Lack of satisfaction with one's band experience was correlated with external/unstable factors, while satisfaction was correlated with internal factors of ability and effort (Chandler, Chiarella, & Auria, 1987). Corenblum and Marshall (1998) also found a correlation between perceived causes of success and intention to continue in band class among ninth grade students. People who attributed success in music to both ability and effort were more likely to enjoy the experience and to desire to continue in it.

Attribution Theory is also the study of choices made, or "perceived causes of one's behavior " (Kelley & Michela, 1980, p. 458). Antecedents of the causes (or attributions) are one's beliefs, motivations, and information one has received and retained. These antecedents lead to the attributions for a decision. When a decision leads to a successful outcome, one is more likely to attribute that successful outcome to internal attributes. For example, a successful businessperson might attribute success to self-discipline, creativity, and communication skills. When a decision leads to a negative outcome, one is generally inclined to attribute that outcome to external factors, such as a bad economy, an unfair playing field, or government intervention.

Motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic) for actions or choices can change depending on

the circumstances. Lepper, Greene, and Nisbett (1973) indicated that an enjoyable activity was actually pursued less often when it was linked to a reward or other incentive. For example, when children who enjoyed drawing with colored felt-tipped pens were given rewards for choosing that activity, they subsequently chose it less often than before receiving the reward, if they believed they were not going to be rewarded again for that choice. What was previously an enjoyable activity (intrinsically motivated) was turned into a chore for reward (extrinsically motivated), similar to a "no pay, no play" position sometimes taken by professional musicians.

Attribution Theory is also used to study people in different fields and how they ascribed reasons for success or failure. Guimond, Begin, and Palmer (1989) studied attitudes of university social science students about success or failure, comparing those attitudes with students in other fields. Their findings indicated that social science majors were more likely to attribute success or failure in an endeavor with situational and cultural factors, whereas students in other fields tended to attribute success or failure with personal dispositional factors. Students of engineering, for example, were more likely to attribute failure or success to the individual, while social science students tended to place the blame or the credit with the larger society. Guimond, Begin, and Palmer also suggested that students who major in the social sciences tend to have a "System-Blame" outlook more often than do students who choose other fields of study. Their findings "show that an education in social science is associated with a decreasing tendency to attribute poverty with personal failure" (p. 137). Thus, a person's attributions for choices or outcomes may reflect personality traits or educational choices.

Attribution Theory was also the theoretical framework in studying peoples' motivations, satisfactions, and choices in areas related to business and commerce. It is used in studying consumer behavior and decision-making (Mizerski, Golden, & Kernan, 1979), in consumer response to advertising (Sparkman, & Locander, 1980), and in consumer perceptions of price fairness (Haws, & Bearden, 2006). The wide range of literature on Attribution Theory demonstrates that it is employed in studying a broad array of problems in a variety of fields. The elements of attribution theory that guided my research are related to self-reported reasons for choices. These include choices to participate in music performance while in school, and choices not to participate in a community music group after high school or college. Reasons (or motivations) for participation and non-participation may be intrinsic or extrinsic. Malle (1999) cited the attribution theory tradition of coding all explanations into three categories: (a) person factors – which involve personal characteristics, (b) situation factors – which have to do with circumstances outside the personal sphere, and (c) interactions – which are a combination of the first two categories.

High School Music Performance Dropouts

McDavid (1999) studied 277 incoming college freshmen at 10 large universities in the western United States, who were in high school band but chose not to participate in band while in college. Choices for non-participation were attributed to declining interest in band music, concern about auditioning (internal), and to class schedules, perceived time commitments, and negative high school band experience (external). McDavid found that choices for non-participation were often made while students were still in high

school. In a similar study Stewart (2007) also found that choices by first-year college students for non-participation were often made in high school, and were attributed to commitments and social reasons. In findings similar to McDavid, choices for non-participation were attributed to time commitments and course load (extrinsic), and extrinsic factors such as fear of auditioning and concerns about musical proficiency. Frakes (1984) and Solly (1986) studied dropout rates of secondary and elementary music students. External factors such as scheduling conflicts, lack of parental support, lack of private lessons and internal factors, such as declining interest were among the most common reasons for students dropping out of music classes in school. In Solly's (1986) study of younger students, issues of time commitment (extrinsic) and declining interest in band (intrinsic) were among the major reasons for lack of participation. Similar research by Stewart (2007) and Constantine (2011) among older students reflected comparable findings.

Social reasons for non-participation also played a key factor in McDavid's (1999) research and were evident in McCrary's (2001) study of 278 college choir participants. In addition to social reasons, self-confidence (internal) in playing ability was found to be a factor by Rhyneer (2002). Rhyneer studied college incoming freshmen who had played in an orchestra while in high school. Fear of auditions and lack of confidence (internal) were among the factors also found by Stewart's (2007) research.

The high school experience, whether positive or negative, was not a universal factor in these studies. Different studies reported conflicting findings. Mountford (1997) referred to researchers (Clothier, 1967; McClarty, 1968) who found a connection between

the high school experience and choices to play in a college band. Faber (2010) surveyed 162 non-music major first year college students from six colleges in Indiana. He reported that the number one reason for college participation in a performing ensemble was a positive high school experience. Milton (1982) also found a significant relationship between a positive high school experience and subsequent college participation. On the other side of that factor, Resnick-Hoff (2009) and Rhyneer (2002) did not find a direct link between the two, while Arnwine (1996) found a relationship between a negative high school experience and non-participation in college. Stewart (2007) found a correlation between over-commitment in high school music (especially in marching band) and choices for non-participation in college, even among students who listed their high school experience as positive.

Other studies of dropouts from high school, college, or in the transition between schools had many of the same findings. For example, Stewart (2007) found attributions for non-participation that were related to "burn-out" during high school years. Stewart also found an observable relationship between exceptional quality high school programs and choices for non-participation in a university band. Decisions for non-participation in a university band were often made while in high school (Delano & Royce, 1987; Stewart, 2007). Attributions for decisions of younger students to continue or not continue in an instrumental music class were correlated with ownership of instrument, high teacher expectations, and student perception of improvement (Morehouse, 1987). In general, choices for dropping out were attributed to intrinsic factors (e.g., declining interest, lack of confidence) and extrinsic ones (e.g., scheduling, time commitments).

Differences in results among these studies may be due to different methodologies and population samples. For example, Faber's (2010) study was among college students in Indiana, and Milton (1982) studied students at small colleges in Ohio. Resnick-Hoff (2009) did not study college students, but rather studied adult choir members in Canada who had been in choir while in high school. Rhyneer (2002) studied string players using an online survey instrument that was not geographically limited. This inconclusive mix of results indicates there is likely no "standard" answer regarding attributions for participation or non-participation.

Community Music Participants

Participation in community music might be attributed in part to musical style preferences. Mantie (2012) showed that community band members tended to enjoy classical music. Goldman (2011) found that school music students had broader musical interests than non-music students, and that school music students were more likely to choose a greater variety of musical styles than were their non-music peers. In this same vein Patterson (1985) learned that musical style preferences played a part in participation choices. In a study of community band participants Patterson reported that participants enjoyed playing marches, orchestral and opera transcriptions, Broadway and show tune arrangements more than jazz, "ethnic" music, waltzes, and polkas, with rock music being the least favorite style. Other pop styles such as rap and hip-hop were not included. Musical style preference appears to be influenced by greater exposure to a variety of styles. For example, Persinger (2001) discovered a statistically significant correlation between preference for classical music and length of school musical training and

experience.

A portion of the literature on individuals involved in community performance groups investigated the relationship between participants' high school music experience and subsequent adult participation. Busch (2005) surveyed 352 individuals involved in performing ensembles at community colleges in Illinois looking for selected predictors of lifelong learning in music. Included in this set of predictors was the amount and type of music involvement while in high school. Busch found a relationship between the amount and type of musical experiences in childhood and the continuance of music involvement in adulthood. Her research indicated that 65% of community music members between age 23 and 49 had played in their high school band or orchestra. She did not indicate where the other 35% got their experience. About one quarter of participants in that age group had also been involved in non-school music performance at least once during their high school years. Busch reported on both extrinsic and intrinsic attributions for participation. She found that adult participants in community performance ensembles generally attributed their participation choices to *extrinsic* influences of childhood family experience, school experience, community experience and to the intrinsic influence of "innate familiarity". According to Busch the term *innate familiarity* refers to influence that came from within the participant, rather than family, school, or community influence. This can be understood as *intrinsic* motivation discussed above, and is similar to the *stable/internal* categories of Attribution Theory (Asmus, 1986a, 1986b; Weiner, 1972).

Several research studies cited participation choices related to a positive high school music experience. Bowen (1995) surveyed 528 adult participants from 14

community bands in Georgia, Alabama, and Florida. One aspect of the study included assessing the influence of the high school music experience among adult band participants, with the majority of respondents (over 85%) reporting band participation while in high school. Bowen found that in addition to the number of years of high school participation, a greater variety of experiences (marching band, concert band, jazz band, small ensembles, honor groups, private lessons) was a factor in continuation into the adult years.

Vincent (1997) used questionnaires to study 631 participants representing 21 community choruses in the state of Kentucky to gain insight into educational level, musical interest, and demographic information on adult musicians, and attendant ramifications for music educators. Adult participation was connected to participation in high school, with about three-fourths of adult participants reporting participation as students. Faivre-Ransom (2001) investigated the Norfolk Chorale in Norfolk, Virginia to engage in a case study to learn the factors that influence individuals toward participation in community music groups. Specifically her purpose was "to determine the extent to which high school experiences influenced music participation among American adults" (p. ii). She found that participation outside of the school setting was a factor in subsequent adult community choir participation.

Similarly, Orend and Keegan (1993), in a study for the National Endowment for the Arts, found that if high school students experience arts events outside the classroom, those students are more likely to participate in the arts as adults. This assertion is repeated by McCrary (2001) in her previously cited study of 278 adult choir participants.

Waggoner (1971) studied two groups of adults who had been active in high school music; one group consisting of former music students who continued in community music, and the other group consisting of former music students who did not continue in music. To locate these adult non-performing participants Waggoner visited community music groups and asked the members to bring a questionnaire to friends whom they had known while in high school but were no longer performing. Because the study was limited to the city of Atlanta, Georgia, it included several individuals whose high school music experiences had been similar, some of whom were in the same music program(s). He found that participants' families had slightly higher incidences of parents and sibling who played an instrument, slightly higher numbers of records of classical music, and that participants in community music had more exposure to classical music in their childhood homes than did non-participants. He also discovered that participants came from slightly larger families. Waggoner's research indicated that the home environment was a better predictor of continuing involvement than particular aspects of the high school music experience. He also found that participants had slightly higher rates of performance experiences in high school and college than non-participants. In addition, Waggoner reported no statistically significant differences in age, education, marital status, gender, or socio-economic between the two groups. His research showed that the participant group frequently cited the joy of music, participation with others, improvement of skills, and enjoyment of performance as reasons for participation. For the non-participant group the greatest reason for non-participation was lack of time. This study has some similarities with the present study in that Waggoner studied people who

were participants in high school performance, but were not participants as adults in community music.

Regarding participation in school music groups, Mantie (2012) showed that most community band participants had learned their instrument in school. Similarly, Spencer (1996) found that school music participation was a part of the overall picture of adult participation, but not necessarily a predictor. Spencer randomly selected seventy-four bands from the Association of Concert Bands. The surveys, which included 174 items, asked for details about band members' school music experience and training. His analysis yielded six main factors of motivation for participating in a community band. One of the six main factors was "Intrinsic Motivation," which was further broken down into five categories of self-growth, musical growth, community pride, social rewards, and the conductor. Along this same line Arasi (2006) studied two high school choral programs (the first as a pilot study, and the second as the main study) to explore the question of how the high school music experience carried over into adult life. Her findings suggested that traditional performing ensembles in schools might not, of themselves, provide the impetus for lifelong participation in music. Holmquist (1995) found that while a majority of adult choir members had been part of their high school choir, an even larger majority had also been active in a non-school choir while in school. Milton (1982) used a researcher-designed survey with incoming college freshmen to learn reasons for participation or non-participation in college band. He reported significant relationships between a positive high school experience, the social aspects of playing in band, and enjoyment of playing their instrument, and participation in college band.

These studies indicated that the high school experience may be influential and important, but are not necessarily the main predictor of young adult community music involvement. Other studies have found social and personal fulfillment attributions for community music participation. Chiodo (1997) undertook a qualitative study of 28 adults who were currently involved in a community music performance group. The purpose of the study was to examine the development of lifelong participation in community performance. Following Stebbins' (1996) "card-sort" model of perceived rewards as reported in a study of barbershop singers Chiodo had each participant, at the end of the interview, sort nine cards listing rewards of music participation (such as "Personal Enrichment") in order from most- to least- rewarding. Participants' rankings were listed on a spreadsheet. As this was not a "primary data source" for the research (p. 79) simple analysis techniques were used. The data were included as something with which to compare the interview data rather than something from which statistical inferences could be drawn. The data were analyzed to build a comprehensive picture of the development of lifelong participation in music.

The research done by Chiodo (1997) is important for the present study because of some similarities as well as differences. The primary subject of both studies was the issue of lifelong music engagement, using interviewing as the primary data collection method. Chiodo studied only people who were currently active participants in community music, while this study was of former music students who could have been part of a community music ensemble, by virtue of their high school experience, but chose not to. In addition, Chiodo's research investigated the issue from an "evolutionary" perspective; how the

situation (participation in community ensemble) came to be. My study, although it could be considered "evolutionary" in some respects, looked at young adult non-participation from a "now" perspective. That is, *why* the situation (non-participation in community music ensemble) currently exists. Another important difference is that Chiodo included professional musicians and music teachers in her study, whereas I studied non-professional musicians.

Chiodo reported that participants ranked personal fulfillment, fun, and self-expression as major attributions for participation in community music. In a case study of a community music school participants (both adults and children) using questions similar to questions used in studies of adults in community music, Baranski (2011) asked: (a) What motivates people to participate in the community music school? (b) What keeps them engaged? (c) What meaning does the community music school have in the lives of the participants? Baranski, like Chiodo, found that personal fulfillment was a major attribute of choices to participate in community music. Heintzelman (1988) surveyed community band members (n=1,785) from bands across the United States for the purpose of studying reasons for participation. The reasons reported for participation were mostly related to musical fulfillment and enjoyment. Mantie (2012) and McCrary (2001) showed that social reasons were important factors in choices to participate in community music groups. Matthews and Kitsantas (2007) found a relationship between participants' perception of the conductors' personality, experience, and positive attitude and participants' enjoyment in music ensembles. This may indicate that extrinsic reasons for choices for young adult non-participation could change if outside circumstances change.

Hypothetically, a student could say, “I might be interested in playing in the X community band, but I don’t think I like the conductor’s personality. Maybe I would participate if there was a different conductor”. In Spencer’s (1996) research, mentioned above, self-growth was listed as the major factor in choices to participate. These studies show intrinsic (e.g., personal motivation) and extrinsic (e.g., home environment) attributions for choices about community music performance.

Pitts, Robinson, and Goh (2012) also studied adults’ choices for participation or non-participation in a community instrumental ensemble. They interviewed members of a community band and a community orchestra in England, looking for attributions for staying in or quitting the music group. Some of the reasons for ceasing to participate included concern about musical skills, lack of interest in the style of music being played, family and social obligations, health issues associated with growing older, and lack of social connection with group members. The reasons for ceasing also had opposite dimensions as reasons for continuing. These reasons for continuation included confidence in musical skills, enjoyment of the style of music, support from family and social group, playing as a way of staying younger, and camaraderie with the other group members. There were some issue in this study that are reflected in my study; time commitments, musical style preference, musical skill concerns, and social connection or lack thereof. This study was different than mine in that I investigated young adult non-players, while their study was about adults of all ages who were playing, but were in the process of withdrawing or quitting. They did more in-depth follow-up with five individuals, four of which had completely dropped out of playing in a community ensemble by the end of the

study. In all cases, the process of withdrawing from community music participation had been a difficult one, and the decision was not made lightly, because their participation had been a meaningful part of their lives.

Equity, Access, Social Justice, and Multiculturalism

Issues of how young adults make choices about non-participation in community music can also be studied in relation to how their school music experience intersected with their own perspectives on social justice, equitable access to resources, and multiculturalism. There is a growing body of literature on research and music education philosophy that is relevant. Paul and Ballantine (2002) wrote of two constructivist approaches to the sociology of education. In constructivist theory individuals create meanings based on what they already know (past experience) and what they learn in their present environment. Psychological constructivist theory regards learning as an individual process in which the teacher creates opportunities for student learning. Social constructivist theory centers meaning-making within a social, rather than individual framework. Woodford (2005) wrote that many music educators have erroneously concluded that all children should attempt to replicate performances of Western classical music, or music of that style. Clinging to traditional performance-based models, repertories, and pedagogies divorces music education from the real musical world and its social problems. Elliott (1990) maintained that the multicultural concept of music education would be limited in its scope if by "multiculturalism" one means only the culture of the immediate student population. He calls for music education that transcends a traditional approach to Western-style classical music, but does not get stuck in a "pop-

only" straightjacket. Reimer (2007) believed that music educators in particular have the responsibility to exemplify the values of equity and social justice in all of our interactions with students, parents, and colleagues. He further stated that music educators have a special obligation beyond those held by other educators because the ways in which music is created and experienced are filled with moral and ethical implications. Elliott (2007) further affirmed the importance of music teachers taking the lead in using music education as the vanguard of social awareness, encouraging teachers to look first at student style preferences, and then at modern works that carry a message; for example John Adams's *On the Transmigration of Souls*, dedicated to the 9/11 victims, or Philip Glass's Symphony No. 6, based on Alan Ginsburg's poem *Plutonium Ode*, an outcry against nuclear contamination. The point of this is not to teach students what political views to have, but rather to use music education as a means of stimulating inquiry into the societal issues that our students encounter in the daily lives. Vaugeois (2007) viewed music education in terms of social justice because music is fundamental to the human experience. Teachers have the responsibility to explore non-traditional experiences in music education in order to allow students freedom to break away from traditional norms of role behavior.

Roberts (2000) wrote about how identity construction and socialization in music are linked together. While socialization is limited to a situational reality and can certainly have a wider field of influence than the isolated location of the social unit, identity construction takes place for an individual within all the social spheres of one's existence. Socialization involves the process through which an individual acquires the norms, values,

beliefs, attitudes and language characteristics of his or her group. It is the continuing process through which an individual becomes acquainted with the social customs of a group of people and accepts the group's attitudes and behaviors. Along a similar line, DeLorenzo (2012) mentioned the need to recruit underrepresented minorities in the music programs. Her view is that while some teachers may assume that all children have equal access to the arts in schools, in practice this is not true. She also maintained that teachers need to be aware of music opportunities outside of the classroom. Likewise, Walker and Hamann (1995) suggested that the social aspects of music participation could be made more prominent in the recruitment of minority students. Hoffman (2012) wrote that music teachers have to guard against implicitly teaching students that some musical heritages (Western classical music) are privileged while others are not. Musical preferences among students may have little to do with their musical experiences. Britten (1996) studied music preferences of college musicians (both non-music majors and music majors) as well as middle school students. She found that preferences in music listening had little to do with the subjects' musical skill, and more to do with their social identity.

Albert (2006) pointed out that schools in poorer neighborhoods have often fewer resources to buy and maintain instruments needed for a traditional band, orchestra, and jazz band program, even though per pupil funding is supposedly equal. Similarly, Smith (1997) collected program data from education departments and music education associations from all 50 states, and found that socioeconomic status was the most important predictor of the existence of string programs in elementary, middle and high schools. At first this may seem incongruous in light of the fact that states are required to

provide the same amount of funds per student regardless of socioeconomic status, and in many cases lower socioeconomic schools get additional funding from a variety of sources. Parental involvement likely plays a key role in supporting and maintaining instrumental music. Middle and upper income families are able to raise more outside money to support the band. Smith's research was confined to string programs and did not study wind instrument programs. As wind instruments are more expensive to buy and maintain than string instruments ($819 for the least expensive Selmer student model alto saxophone versus $188 for a Mueller student model violin), it may be that the disparity is even greater when it comes to wind instruments. In southern California high schools there are fewer than half as many sting programs as wind programs (SCSBOA, 2015). Reasons why there are fewer string programs than wind programs in high schools may have to do with lack of teacher training, an emphasis on marching bands (in support of the football program), and fewer string specialists in the education field. Further research in this area would be helpful.

Adding new offerings to an existing music program can have beneficial effects for the overall program. Gillespie, Russell, and Hamann (2014) found that adding additional programs (in this case, strings) to the existing music program at a school did not lessen the enrollment in the school's other programs. Rather, most schools reported an increase in the existing music programs. This may indicate that adding new music class offerings does not necessarily diminish the other classes. It tends to increase the overall number of students participating in music.

According to Bates (2012) sustainability in music education does not work well in

a situation where students comes from poverty if that music education has focused on playing expensive instruments that students will not be able to afford after the end of their school experience. It is wasteful to expend large amounts of time and money on costly instruments that students will likely not play long term. Resources might be better spent on ukuleles and guitars, and time be spent with popular music. However, this opens up the charge that less expensive instruments are for lower income students. This can have the effect of deepening the divide between lower, middle, and upper class students. He wrote that teachers should be careful not to implicitly communicate "classicist" (defined as rigidly traditional) beliefs about the sources of poverty (that the poor are lazy or intellectually inferior). He also cautioned against setting standards that are more easily met by students with greater resources. Students who have family support for private lessons and practice at home (more often found in middle and upper income families) may attribute their higher achievement to greater diligence or superior intelligence. He goes on to say that while there are no easy solutions, music teachers are in a unique position to alleviate, at least somewhat, the impact of social class differences in the classroom.

According to Allsup and Shieh (2012) social justice in music education is not a specific lesson or particular approach, nor is it necessarily about pop music. They wrote that while a traditional band program that plays Holst may not look "radical" it can still be operated according to "radical" values of inclusion, fairness, and equal opportunity for all. They believe that the traditional large ensemble classes of band, orchestra, jazz band can, and must, be made culturally and socially relevant to lower income students.

Similarly, Fitzpatrick (2012) also wrote of using culturally relevant music within the context of a traditional ensemble. But competence in academically oriented musical areas need not be limited to traditional ensembles. Myers (2008) spoke of the need to inculcate rigorous music education (such as theory, sightreading, and analysis) into the types of classes that are oriented toward pop music rather than Western classical music.

Poverty of students and their relation to music has been studied in rural and urban populations, including issues outside the realm of music. Harris (2013) wrote about the relationship between low socioeconomic status, music, and health. Her contention was that people who shifted their socioeconomic status through participation in musical activities also probably increased their health benefits. People in the lower socioeconomic status tend to have more medical problems and shorter lifespans than do middle and upper income people. Her conjecture was based on her personal interactions with participants in local community music projects in Vancouver, Canada over a span of 15 years.

Issues of poverty are also raised in non-urban areas. Titon (2013) has been studying the music and culture of Appalachia since the 1970s. His ethnomusicological research has put him into long-term contact with several community, church, and educational music programs. His reflections on the causes of chronic poverty in the area have some similarities to researchers whose work has been in urban areas. Two of the similarities are 1) an unflattering stereotypical image of poor people associated with laziness and lack of intellect, and 2) an unrealistically romanticized notion of a fragment of a folk society, with its emphasis on loyalty, family, and honor. Overarching this is the

panoply of mostly failed attempts (by government, charities, or private industry) to change the socioeconomic landscape in areas of poverty. In both cases (rural and urban poverty) there has been a strong emphasis on using music making as both a political act as well as an economic act. This does not mean getting into music performance as a means of income. It is rather, in Titon's opinion, the recognition that music as self-expression creates personal values that may lead to social and economic empowerment.

Inequalities of access and opportunity have far-reaching consequences on music education that are not as prevalent in general education. Low-income students may get the same science or math textbooks that middle- or upper-income students get. They may get the same opportunities for participation in sports and other school funded programs. However, low-income music students have fewer opportunities for enrichment that comes with owning an instrument, taking private lessons, and participating in school and non-school music activities and groups, because these things are not generally made available by the schools, but are rather provided by the students' parents directly or through organized fund-raising activates. How some of this inequality can be mitigated will be addressed in the final chapter.

Music Teacher Education Related to Issues of Social Justice

Music teacher preparation is an important consideration in an approach to music education that values social justice and multiculturalism. However, traditional large ensemble performance classes often have not been places where the issues the relationship of music education to equity, access, social justice, and multiculturalism were considered. Lundquist (2002) advocated that teacher education should more fully

address the issues of multiculturalism. According to her, teacher preparation for the diversity of musical styles and cultures has not yet matured into a recognized body of pedagogical literature. Thus, teachers often have little more than a superficial exposure to methods and procedures that can be implemented in a multicultural music education setting. North, Hargreaves, and Tarrant (2002) wrote that judgments about the quality of musical styles or individual pieces must be made in sociocultural context from which the music emanates. Caution is in order when assessing the validity of a musical selection that falls outside the styles already embraced by conventional norms.

Doyle (2014) administered a survey to 584 music teachers from 20 large urban cities to determine the effects of teacher/student demographic differences and culturally relevant attitudes about teaching. Based on her findings she said that efforts to improve urban music education should focus on culturally relevant preparation of music teachers. Isbel (2008) administered a 128-item questionnaire to 578 preservice music teachers enrolled in traditional teacher education programs to learn about their musical self-identity and the influences that contributed to their choices about becoming music teachers. His research indicated that positive performance experiences were influential factors in choices to become music teachers. He surmised that performances provide students with the opportunities to view an influential teacher in action, thus initiating a desire to teach. Advocating for broader teacher preparation in issues of music, political action, and social justice, Levy and Byrd (2011) set forth a body of 59 school-appropriate popular songs (up to 2005) that have messages regarding issues of social justice such as accepting others, challenging discrimination, examining privilege, and rejecting violence.

In a review of how music teachers are educated at the college and university level Woodford (2002) wrote that music education issues of identity construction should be introduced early in the educational process. Music teachers have a variety of roles such as performer, conductor, composer, arranger, critic, musicologist, mentor, facilitator, theorist, diplomat, travel agent, visionary, public speaker, and moral agent, in addition to many other roles. He pointed out that emerging music teachers tend to model themselves on their former high school music teachers. This may make sense because presumably, people who want to teach school music had a good school music experience themselves. This can have a conservative effect however, if the new teacher's model of a "good teacher" had little time or interest in exploring the multicultural aspects of modern educational philosophy.

Literature in these areas is included in this review because it touches on the meaning of lifelong participation in ways that may be missing from traditional performance classes. If music teachers truly want their students to be lifelong participants in music (in the broadest sense), they should explore ways to give their students tools and skills needed for participation outside the bounds of traditional ensembles. Some ways to address this issue are considered in the final chapter.

Summary of Literature Review

Most of the research studies in this review (other than the literature on equity and multiculturalism) involved people who at some point played in a band or orchestra during their school years; some of them continued to play as adults, some did not. Researchers looked at factors that influenced choices for participation and non-participation. Many of

the studies mentioned here involved some type of connection between high school instrumental or vocal music and subsequent adult participation or non-participation in music (McDavid, 1999; Stewart, 2007; Rhyneer, 2002). These studies have provided information about participants including age, gender, education level, income level, prior music experience, motivation, musical and social factors, and musical preferences. Several of the music education studies in this review utilized Attribution Theory as a theoretical framework (Asmus, 1986a, 1986b; Legette, 1998; Matthews & Kitsantas, 2007).

Lacking in these studies, however, is a clear picture of former students who could choose to continue making music in a community performance group (by virtue of their high school experience), but do not. Using Attribution Theory as a theoretical framework this research project explored young adult non-participants in community instrumental ensemble groups.

CHAPTER THREE: EXPLAINING THE PROCESS

In this study I explored the choice by qualified and experienced young adult high school graduates to not participate in community music performance groups, and the reasons they give for this choice. I wanted to study people who are at the stage of life in which they are working full time rather than preparing for a career, so the study did not include young adults who were full time college students. There was however, one exception to this. One of the participants had finished a year of college and was unsure about continuing full time in college. The geographic area was limited to the greater Los Angeles area of southern California.

I based my methodology on procedures employed by researchers mentioned in chapter two. Chiodo (1997) used individual interviews and chose to study a smaller group of individuals (28) rather than using quantitative methods (primarily surveys) and larger groups of people employed by many other researchers. My study also gathered data through interviews with a smaller number of participants. Rather than gathering data through a series of individual interviews as Chiodo did, this study employed focus group interviews to gather data. Dabback (2007) used focus group interviews as part of his data gathering method. The purpose of Dabback's focus group interviews was "not consensus, but rather the gathering of pluralistic perspectives" (p. 16). He also used focus groups because "the social interaction in groups facilitates discussion and researcher probing more so than individual interviews" (p. 17).

Waggoner (1971) studied "non-participants" (adults who were in their high school band or orchestra, but were no longer playing their instruments) as well as "participants".

His study used a researcher-designed survey for both groups. Waggoner's study had relevance for my methodology because he used an extensive network of participants to reach the non-participants for the survey. Although he found useful information about the characteristics of non-participants, the nature of his data collection instrument (survey) precluded the kind of deeper understanding of the issues that are better achieved through qualitative methods.

My study therefore employed qualitative aspects of methods used by Chiodo and Dabback (interviews) and Waggoner's subjects (adult non-participants). Based upon the research questions from chapter one I was able to examine how young adults with previous high school band or orchestra experience attribute the decision not to become involved in community music performance, on the ways in which the participants engage with music in their lives, on the their musical self-identities and self-described musical ability, and on the their views regarding community music performing groups.

Case Study Research

When considering research that relies on qualitative design there are several types of methods that might be appropriate (Crewswell, 2007), although "case study" is one of the most often-used qualitative research designs (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003; Lichtman, 2010). There is even some disagreement among writers about whether "case study" is a "methodology" or a "choice of what is studied" (Creswell, 2007, p. 74). Case study research design does not currently have a universal pattern that fits every situation (Stake, 1995; Creswell, 2007; Lichtman, 2010), so it is critical that the researcher carefully consider every aspect of the design, choosing specific protocols and features from among

available choices that demonstrate both academic rigor and the researcher's familiarity with various approaches to the design. This includes knowledge of the theoretical underpinnings of the methodology, how that theory has been employed in existing research, and how that theory can be used in the present research. For this reason, what follows is an analysis of certain aspects of case study research design, data collection, and data analysis that were used in this research, along with the rationale for making use of those features.

Gall, Gall, & Borg (2003) wrote: “We define case study as the in-depth study of one or more instances of a phenomenon in its real-life context that reflects the perspectives of the participants involved in the phenomenon” (p. 447). They identify a phenomenon as “a process, event, person, or other item of interest to the researcher”. In my research the phenomenon was the non-participation in music performance by young adult former high school music students.

Roulston (2006) gave four different purposes of research: Prediction, Understanding, Emancipation, and Deconstructing. Prediction is primarily associated with experimental studies; Emancipation refers to studies that seek to describe the effects of discriminatory practices; and Deconstruction has to do with dismantling of “taken-for-granted assumptions” (p. 163). Using Roulston's format the purpose of this study fell into the Understanding category. According to Roulston this is the predominant research category in music education, in which “researchers provide descriptive accounts of participants' experiences from various theoretical perspectives” (p. 160).

Yin (2009) wrote of the type of question that could best be answered by a case

study. If the form of the major research question is primarily "how" or "why," (the Understanding category of Roulston), if the researcher does not require control of behavioral events (as in experimental research), and if the research focuses on contemporary situations, then case study design is a relevant and acceptable method for the research. As noted above, the research questions for this project focused primarily on why young adult, former high school music students do not choose community music performance as an on-going part of their lives. Creswell (2007, p. 75) states that case study is appropriate when the researcher has clearly identifiable boundaries and seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the case or cases. For this reason the case study approach was an appropriate methodology for pursuing this research.

The next decision to be made involved the type of case study to be employed. Yin (2009, p. 46) delineated two types of case study designs, each of which can be further divided into single or multiple-case studies. The two types of designs are "embedded" and "holistic." An embedded case study is one in which the case has a variety of independent (embedded) units that have various functions within the case. A holistic case study is one in which the unit of analysis is studied for a single effect rather than the ways the individual parts interact with one another. The nature of my research follows the holistic model rather than the embedded model, because I was studying a single group for a single effect (non-participation in community music). Since this is about individuals who are in this group (people who played music in school but not as adults), the holistic model suggested by Yin represented an effective starting point for building the methodology for this study.

The “Non-Performing” case was comprised of individuals who were involved in a school performing group while in high school, but have had little or no performance experience since high school. The label “Non-Performing” was in no sense intended to be pejorative. Rather, it was meant merely to be descriptive. In focus group interviews I did not refer to these individuals as “non-performers.” Rather, I referred to them simply as young adults who have chosen to do other things with their time. I took care not to ask questions in such a way as to alienate the participants or to put them on the defensive. Yin (2009) suggests avoiding “why” questions when the form of the question could seem to be accusatory, even though the research question(s) are “why” or “how” questions. Rather than ask, “Why don't you participate in a community performing group?” the form of the questions was more like, “What factors make it difficult for young adults to participate in community music groups?”

Judging the Quality of Research Design

Yin (2009, p. 40) enumerated four commonly accepted criteria for establishing the quality of social research. These four criteria are construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. Construct validity generally refers to the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure. From Yin's perspective the idea of construct validity in case study refers to the extent to which the data collection follows a set of operational measures which, even though there is a “subjective” element to the data collection, can be demonstrated to be empirically valid and independently identifiable. In my study all of the focus group interviews followed the same set of operational measures.

On the issue of internal validity Yin (2009, p. 42) pointed out that this is normally

given greatest attention in experimental and quasi-experimental research. He then showed one point at which qualitative case study does have an issue of internal validity: the broader issue of making inferences. An "inference" is not as strong as a causal relationship, but it still has a similar element of association of variables. To increase internal validity Yin (2009, p. 43) suggested, among other things, the tactics of "explanation building." Explanation building is not a direct, factual account of what brings about a specific result. It is instead a series of facts and perspectives that taken together build an overall picture of a case, in the same way that points of color coalesce into a painting.

External validity deals with the problem of knowing whether the results are "generalizable beyond the immediate case study" (Yin, 2009, p. 43). Yin made the point that this kind of generalization is not analogous to samples and universes as in statistical generalization. It is rather an analytical generalization that seeks to explain a particular set of results in terms of some broader theory. Yin (2009, p. 131) also suggested a second general analytic strategy: developing a descriptive framework. In some instances this is the preferred approach, especially when the explicit purpose is a descriptive one. In the design of a case study in which a descriptive framework is employed as a general analytic strategy, it is important to delineate topics of data before data collection begins. In this study the questions posed organized the data into descriptive frameworks such as in-school and non-school music experience, length and nature of school participation, and other information that fit into Yin's descriptive framework.

In case study research the issue of reliability is understood to refer to the extent to

which a subsequent investigator would reach similar conclusions by following the same procedures as the initial investigator (Yin, 2009, p. 45). Reliable case study design ensures that others could carry out the same research, with similar results. In this case, additional researchers may find that specific attributions would differ from individual to individual, but the end result would be that of learning the broader attributions for non-participation.

Yin (2009, p. 62) made the point that case study design as mentioned above is not intended to be a rigid straight-jacket which allows no changes. Rather, it is intended to be a guide that can grow and change to accommodate both new information and the evolution of the study itself. Still, Yin cautioned that it is imperative to keep the research question foremost in the researcher's thinking as the study moves forward, avoiding unnecessary modifications.

Case study methodology as described by Roulston (2006), Creswell (2007), Yin (2009), Stake (2006), and Lichtman (2010) formed the basis of the design of this study. Data were gathered in the form of focus group interviews. The data were analyzed to look for and understand elements of the participants' experience and motivation that may have an effect on their non-participation in community music groups.

Focus Group Interviews

Interviews were conducted in focus groups. Questions for the focus group interviews (Appendix A) allowed interviewees to reflect upon their own experiences and to attribute reasons for non-participation in a community instrumental ensemble group. Methodology for this study was based on focus group interviews as outlined by Krueger

(1994) and Kreuger and Casey (2009), Stewart and Shamdasani (1990), Morgan (1997) and on procedures used in previous related studies.

Krueger (1994) asserted an advantage of focus groups over one-on-one interviews in that focus groups allow people to think in response to stimuli from others. This kind of interaction can help participants recall previous experiences and can help generate additional insights (Krueger, 1994). Creswell (2007) recommends focus groups when interaction among study participants might yield better or additional information. Focus groups can work well when the information to be discussed is not essentially sensitive or private, and when ideas might emerge from the group itself.

According to Kreuger and Casey (2009) focus groups should be used when the researcher is looking for the range of ideas and feelings that people have about an issue, when the purpose is to uncover factors that influence opinions, behavior, or motivation, and when the researcher may want ideas to emerge from the group. Because my research questions pertained to ideas and feelings that people have about the factors that influence opinions and behavior, and because additional ideas may emerge from the groups, these reasons made focus group interviews an appropriate data gathering method for this study.

Limitations of group interviews can come into play in this research, because groups are more difficult to organize, and groups can more easily get off topic (Krueger, 1994). Personality conflicts might arise due to different views and opinions being expressed by members of the group. Some participants may be hesitant to express ideas, while others may try to dominate the discussion. While there are limitations and potential

difficulties in working with focus groups the advantages listed above made this approach favorable.

Attribution Theory as Reflected in Interview Questions

Attribution Theory is the theoretical framework in numerous music education studies. One attribution for dropping out may have to do with fear of auditioning or concern about the difficulty level of the music (Dachinger, 1967; Delano & Royce, 1987; Frakes, 1984; Kruze, 2012; Lawrence & Waggoner, 1971; McDavid, 1999; Pitts, Robinson, and Goh, 2012; Solly, 1986; Stewart, 2007). This should be covered in a focus group interview question about attributions for quitting. "What is your perception of the difficulty level of music in a community performance group? Do you think it is harder or easier than what you experienced in high school, or is it about the same? Do you think the difficulty level or the possible audition process is a concern for most people as they consider whether or not to continue playing" (See Appendix A, number 3)?

Orbuch's (1997) observation that attribution theory focuses on the process by which people make explanations for actions leads to questions that describe a personal journey. According to Orbuch, an account is a story-like construction that reveals meaning-making. The following focus group interview questions are taken from this aspect of attribution theory (See Appendix A, numbers 1 – 2):

- Describe your music experience (instrumental and/or vocal) from the beginning up to high school.
- Talk about what made you want to stay in music performance classes while you were in high school.

Kinney (2010) found that younger students (grades 6–8) who remained in school music tended to be from higher socio-economic status (SES) and from two-parent or two-guardian homes. Nierman and Veak (1997) also reported that students from a lower SES were less likely to engage in school music, as did Corenblum and Marshall (1998). This brings up the question of whether economic and/or social stability might be attributed to choices for young adult non-participation. Interview questions for a focus group need to be non-threatening (Kreuger & Casey, 2009). Because of this, specific questions about the role of social stability or SES should be avoided. Another way to approach the issue would be to generalize it (Krueger & Casey, 2009), by asking about whether it is easier for people with more resources to participate in community music in context of a larger question about factors that might make community music participation difficult or unappealing (see Appendix A, number 4).

McDavid (1999) and Stewart (2007) had similar questions, some of which were appropriated for use in my study. Both of them had the survey respondents rank statements describing reasons for nonparticipation in college. The following statements, which were used in some form by both researchers, can be applied to young non-college-attending adults. The wording in Stewart's survey was exactly the same as in McDavid's with the exception of the words in *italics*.

> "To what extent did each of the following influence your decision not to participate in a college band? Please circle the correct response as it applies to the *extent of* (Stewart) *degree of* (McDavid) each area had on your decision."

Attributions from Stewart (2007) and McDavid (1999) that apply to my study (either directly or with some modification):

- High school or college friend's participation.
- Negative high school music experience.
- "Burn Out" from while in school music ensemble.
- Time commitment of the college band.
- Time conflict with other academic courses.
- Lack of information on the college band program.
- Quality/reputation of the college band program.
- Reputation of the conductor.
- Fear of the audition process.
- Availability of a quality instrument.
- Transportation problems.
- Work schedule conflicts.

The above attributions can be used in a survey with a Likert scale for answers, but not easily used in a focus group interview. However, the concepts referred to by these statements can be formulated into questions for discussion (see Appendix A, number 4). Question number 4 is as follows:

Talk about issues that make it difficult to participate in a community music ensemble. Issues might include the following:

- Lack of friends in community ensemble.

- Negative high school experience.
- Time conflicts with other interests and/or responsibilities.
- Lack of information about community music ensembles.
- Quality/reputation of community music ensembles.

Participant Recruitment and Interview Plan

To recruit participants I employed the following methods:

1. I contacted high school music teacher colleagues, informed them of my research, and gave them a letter that they could send to former students, either by mail or by email. I did not make direct, initial contact with prospective participants.

2. I visited community music ensembles. Members of community music groups may have friends from their high school years with whom they are still in contact. I informed them of my research, and gave them a flyer that they could send to possible participants, either by mail or by email. I did not make direct, initial contact with prospective participants.

3. I used social media (e.g., band booster club or band alumni Facebook pages) to locate former high school band and orchestra members. I asked permission of the administrators of these social media outlets to post a notice describing my research. The notices included information on how to contact me for anyone who may have wanted to participate.

Chiodo (1997) began with a pilot interview followed by 28 individual interviews Dabback (2007) also conducted a pilot focus group to develop a “hypothetical predictive

model that informed further focus group participant selection" (p. 18). In my study, there was little need to use a pilot test to "inform group participant selection" (as Dabback did), because the population of interest (young adult non-participants with previous high school performing experience) needs no additional delineation into age group categories. Krueger and Casey (2009) recommended testing the interview questions with a few people, but not pilot-testing the questions in a focus group interview. Therefore, I pilot-tested the interview questions (Appendix A) with music teacher colleagues who have expressed an interest in my research.

According to Krueger and Casey (2009) the accepted rule of thumb in determining how many focus groups to conduct is "plan three or four groups with each type of category of individual" (p. 21). "Category" here refers to different types of participants to be studied. After conducting three or four groups, the researcher should determine if saturation has been reached. The term "saturation" refers to the point at which no new information is produced. Since there is a single type of individual in my research (young adult non-participants) it would follow that my research would need at least three groups. It was, however, impossible to predict ahead of time at what point "saturation" would be reached. I therefore decided to have five focus group sessions.

Recruitment of Participants and Scheduling of Focus Group Interview Sessions

In July 2014, I sent email notices and letters by U.S. mail (Appendix D) to twenty-one high school music teachers in Ventura County, my county of residence.[1] Notices were posted on Facebook pages of eleven of these high schools that had band or

[1] I live in Ventura county and work in Los Angeles County. Ventura County is part of the greater Los Angeles area of Southern California.

orchestra Facebook pages available to the general public. I also made phone calls to thirteen of the teachers for whom I had home phone numbers, and emailed notices to ninety-seven secondary music teacher colleagues in the Los Angeles Unified School District.[2] I posted notices on eight LAUSD high school band or orchestra Facebook pages that are in Los Angeles County, but are in the western end of the San Fernando Valley, and are thus within thirty-five miles of my home in Camarillo, (Ventura County) CA. Emails were sent to music teachers at Ventura County Community College, Oxnard Community College, L.A. Pierce College, and California State University, Northridge. Similar notices were placed on alumni Facebook pages of California State University, Northridge, California Lutheran University, Moorpark Community College, and Los Angeles Pierce College. I contacted two local Ventura county newspapers, one of which (Ventura County Star) posted a notice on its Facebook page. I passed out flyers at two community orchestras, two community bands, and posted notices in coffee shops in the area. As a result of these efforts I received inquiries from forty-one potential participants and replied with specific information on when the focus group interview sessions would take place. Twenty-three potential participants agreed to participate, but two people (one person scheduled for the November session and one person for the September session) were not able to attend.

I held five focus group interview sessions between August 17, 2014 and December 14, 2014 with a total of twenty-one participants. The August session had three

[2] I had access to email addresses of secondary vocal and instrumental teachers from a list that was published in 2008. After 2008 the LAUSD Arts Education Branch no longer made a list of music teachers available. The list did not differentiate between high school and middle school, or between vocal and instrumental music.

participants. The September session had four participants. The October session had seven participants. The November session had two participants. The December session had five participants. Each participant attended a single session. Ages of participants ranged from 18 to 34 years: three were men and eighteen were women. All of the participants had been in an instrumental performance class for at least two years while in high school, and were not currently participating in a community or college band or orchestra.

Each session began with reading the consent script (Appendix B) and giving each participant a page with contact information for my adviser and for the Boston University Internal Review Board. Next, I read the questions that would be discussed during the session. After that I invited each participant to respond to the first question. As each session ensued there was an opportunity for each participant to respond to every question. Participants were encouraged to interact with each other, ask questions of each other, and to reflect on the other participants' experiences as it related to their own. All participants knew that these sessions were not designed in any way to make anyone feel guilty about not continuing to play music in their young adult years.

None of the participants showed any signs of embarrassment or discomfort in answering any of the questions. No participant asked to be excused from participating or withdrew their consent, either during the session or after the sessions were completed. All of the participants expressed interest in the findings of this research and asked to be kept informed as the research reached its conclusion. During the sessions the participants conversed freely with one another as they responded to the questions.

After the sessions were completed I had transcripts made of each session. The transcripts were imported into NVivo for Mac, version 10.2.0(1375), a qualitative research program. NVivo is a powerful tool that enables the researcher to import documents, uses queries to find key words or phrases, and allows coding of phrases into categories. I used NVivo to look for recurring themes and ideas. The initial results are found in Chapter Four, Table One.

Since Question Four represents the focal point of this research, I had the responses read and coded independently by two colleagues.[3] Both co-readers were given instructions and documentations via Skype. In the oral and written instructions I introduced the topic of the research, the research questions, and the theoretical framework. Both co-readers were also given transcripts of all the responses to Question Four. Instructions for co-readers were divided into four sections:

1. Identify statements that answer the question. Many participants' stories, while interesting, include extraneous details. Try and find statements or portions of statements that speak directly to the question at hand.

2. Following the constructs of Attribution Theory, determine the best category for each statement. Each participant may have statements in more than one category, but each statement needs to be put into a single category. A single statement cannot be put into more than one category, however portions of statements (fragments) can be put into different categories. Multiple statements by the same

[3] Diane Grieser, DMA, and Robert Colonico. Dr. Greiser completed her dissertation at Boston University in 2014. Mr. Colonico is currently finishing his dissertation at Boston University.

participant that go into a single category are regarded as one statement for that category.

3. Highlight or underline the relevant portion of the statement and write the code symbol next to it. *I play baseball because <u>my friends play baseball</u>.* **II.A.**

4. Using the spreadsheet provided, place an X in the box representing the appropriate attribution next to the participant's name.

Attributions for non-participation were coded into categories of Time Constraints, Financial Considerations, Musical Considerations, Social Considerations, Awareness / Reputation of Community Instrumental Ensembles, and Other. Each category was further divided into Internal and External categories, or *Reason* explanations and *Cause* explanations. According to Malle (1999) *Reason* explanations have to do with the inner world of a subject (thoughts, opinions, feelings, hopes, beliefs) and originate from within a person's situation. *Cause* explanations originate from outside the person. Categories of self-described attributions for non-participation in community band or orchestra are found below in Table 1. Results of coding from all three readers (myself and two co-readers) can be found below in Tables 2, 3, and 4. Where two or more readers coded a portion of a response the same (e.g., II.A.) it was deemed sufficient to code it in that category. Where a single reader coded a portion in a certain category but other readers did not, it was deemed not coded, but was noted for further review in the overall analysis of the data. Analysis of data from Question Four represents the agreement of results of coding from the two co-readers and myself.

Summary of Methodology

The design of a case study research can evolve as the study proceeds (Stake, 2006; Yin, 2009), but the central focus of the research remains constant. Data for this case study were collected using questions in focus group interview sessions. In the interviews there were some participants who did more of the talking, while others did less; but all participants made valuable contributions. As will be seen in the following chapter, all of the participants added important personal insights and perspectives that helped build a picture of young adult lives, their high school music experiences, their lack of connection with community music ensembles, along with their ongoing interest in meaningful music engagement.

CHAPTER FOUR: EXTRAPOLATING THE DATA

Analyzing data in qualitative research presents unique challenges. Creswell (2007) mentioned three core elements of qualitative data analysis:

1. Reducing data into meaningful segments and naming the segments (coding).
2. Combining codes into categories or themes.
3. Displaying and making comparisons.

Creswell stated that some researchers begin with a set of *a priori* codes, while others allow the codes to emerge from the data. Regardless of the starting point, he maintained that codes are contextual and dynamic; that they can change, grow, and merge as the analysis proceeds.

Lichtman (2010) listed six steps in the analysis process, but as some of the steps are revising the previous step, her process is very similar:

1. Initial coding and revision of initial coding.
2. Initial list of categories or central ideas and revision of categories or ideas.
3. Moving from categories to concepts or themes, and communicating the results.

Taking the lead of these two experts in the field of qualitative research I started with a list of possible codes. As I read and re-read the transcripts, and listened several times to each focus group interview session, I looked for concepts and themes that emerged from the sessions as well as for statements that fit into an existing code. Table 1 represents the codes that emerged from the interviews and the times the codes were referenced. When a participant made reference to a code more than once it was counted

as a single reference. That is why there are no more than 21 references to each code, corresponding to the total number of participants.

Table 1 - Initial Categories and References in Interviews	
Initial Categories	**References:**
High School Music Reasons – Social	21
High School Music Reasons – Musical	19
High School Music – Ensembles participated in, more than one	20
High School Music – Perceptions and attitudes, positive	19
Parent support – positive	8
Parent support – lack of	3
Community Instrumental Ensemble – Lack of awareness	12
Community Instrumental Ensemble – Difficulty of music	18
Community Instrumental Ensemble – Positive perceptions of	6
Community Instrumental Ensemble connection to HS – lack of	6
Reasons for Non-Participation – Audition	9
Reasons for Non-Participation – poor CIE reputation	1
Reasons for Non-Participation – Declining skill level	7
Reasons for Non-Participation – Financial	14
Reasons for Non-Participation – Lack of interest	3
Reasons for Non-Participation – Music of CIE not appealing	1
Reasons for Non-Participation – Negative CIE experience	1
Reasons for Non-Participation – Negative college experience	1
Reasons for Non-Participation – Need to practice	3
Reasons for Non-Participation – Social	7
Reasons for Non-Participation – Time	21
Continuing Music Engagement – positive	19
Continuing Music Engagement – negative	2
Community Instrumental Ensemble – Future plans, likely	16
Community Instrumental Ensemble – Future plans, unlikely	5

Data from Question Number One

Describe your music experience (instrumental and/or vocal) from the beginning up to high school.

Several participants reported various levels of music learning prior to elementary school. Regarding the onset of participation in school music, nine participants had begun school music by middle school, six while in elementary school, and one started in high school.

Not surprisingly, all participants reported an overall positive experience with their high school music. Most of the comments revolved around the closeness they felt with the other music students, their respect for the teacher, and their enjoyment of learning and performing the music. They all reported on the challenges of musical skill development and the feeling of accomplishment that came with accomplishing a musical goal.

All but one of the participants reported being in marching band while in high school. They all participated in concert band or wind ensemble in the spring semesters. Ten of them also participated in jazz band, and one was part of winter drumline. One reported orchestra experience while in high school, and for one year as a college student. Two others participated in music performance (concert band) while in college. One played in a community band for a year after college, but not since that time. Another participated for a year in drum line after leaving high school. All but one of the participants played a wind instrument. One played percussion only, and another played both percussion and a wind instrument. None played an orchestral string instrument, although several participants reported playing guitar and piano, but not as the primary

instrument. Six participants reported having private music lessons. Table Two shows the participants' music experience.

Table 2 - Participants' Music Experience from High School to Post High School

Name[4]	Age	Sex	MB	CB	JB	OR	PRVT	CIE-HS	CIE-PHS	CO
Adrian	33	F	x	x			x		x	x
Amara	34	F	x	x						
Andrea	34	F	x	x						
Arian	34	F	x	x			x			
Brad	31	M	x	x	x					
Brandon	20	M	x	x						
Diana	21	F	x	x	x					
Gabriela	22	F	x	x	x					
Jessica	27	F	x	x	x					
Julia	30	F	x	x	x					
Kellie	23	F		x			x	x		
Kevin	29	M	x	x	x		x		x	x
Lindsey	24	F	x	x	x					
Marie	34	F	x	x		x	x			x
Monica	33	F	x	x						
Nicole	30	F	x	x	x		x			
Reecie	20	F	x	x	x					
Samantha	18	F	x	x						
Sara	27	F	x	x	x					
Shannon	32	F	x	x						
Stefanie	34	F	x	x						

MB = Marching Band
CB = Concert Band
JB = Jazz Band
CIE-HS = Community Instrumental Ensemble while in high school
CO = Played in college
CIE-PHS = Community Instrumental Ensemble post high school
PRVT = Private lessons

[4] Names are actual names, but last names have been omitted.

Although it was not specifically asked in the question, parent support was mentioned by some participants in their responses to Question One. Parent and family support included encouragement to join the band or willingness to pay for lessons and/or instruments. It also included references to parents' participation in fund-raising, attendance at performances, and involvement with band parent groups although no participants specifically mentioned that their parents had taken a leadership role in any of the parent activities. Not all parents were initially supportive of their children's interest in music while in school. Samantha and Shannon both reported that their respective parents at first tried to steer them in other directions, but were supportive after they made the decision to join the band.

Data and Analysis from Question Number Two

Talk about what made you want to stay in music performance classes while you were in high school.

The dominant reason given by participants for staying in an instrumental music performance class while in high school was that of the social aspect. As Diana said, "for me, it's kind of like the friends I made."[5]

Participants reported feeling at home with the band, having a broad network of friends in the band, and seeing the band room as a safe, welcoming place. Nicole said. "Honestly, it was the camaraderie." Andrea agreed, "As much as everyone says, band was their home. And you know you felt comfortable there versus the outside world. I loved the culture of what we did and what we learned."

[5] Unless otherwise noted, participants' comments in quotes have not been edited for grammar or syntax.

Many reported that it was a major part of their lives while in high school. Kellie said, “First off, I had a lot of really good friends in band so we all kind of stuck together. My best friends . . . I liked to go in there at lunch and hang out with like people in the band room and stuff. So, it was basically my life.” Brandon also concurred, “And I thought like it was really cool. So, that’s what kind of what kept me in. I got to know more of the people in . . . the drum line, in the band. They’re really cool, so I guess in essence it was kind of like the home.”

Some found the “safe place” of the band room a shelter to come to when they felt alienated from other aspects of school. Jessica said, “But, yeah, just like everybody else it was that kind of home feeling. That safe place you could go to during the day when anything bad happened” and “I think band was, it was a nice welcoming atmosphere for anyone who was quirky and different and nerdy and anything they wanted to be.” Amara echoed a similar sentiment, “I kind of found my place in high school with the band. It was almost like a built-in friend group, and a family.”

The second most cited reason for being in a music performance class was the nature and value of music in one’s life and the challenge of learning and performing. As Marie put it, “and so, I wanted anything that touched on music any way, just because it made me feel good.” Nicole agreed, “I always have to be in something music because music is my soul. I feel like I have no soul if I don’t have music. And there’s that adrenaline rush from performing that is everything.”

Choices of music to be learned also played a part in most of the participants’ valuing of the school music experience. Kellie said, “And, I just, I loved the music that

they chose too. It was really rare that there was a piece that I didn't like. That's what I can feel good about myself, and feel accomplished, that I was really good at something. I was good at my regular classes as well, but [being in the band] gave me a sense of pride." Regarding choices of music Sara noted that her teacher "let us request songs all the time. We got to play *Lord of the Rings* because we asked. We got to play *Pirates* [of the Caribbean] because we asked."

Julia spoke of the connection between the challenges faced in learning the music, in seeing progress and in performance: "The music. I love hearing music. I love playing music. And just being challenged and have that style like, just knowing that you had something that you couldn't do at all and be able to accomplish it. That is like things I like to do. And you could see your progress. You could hear your progress." Also Kevin, along with many others, spoke of the fun of the performance, "It was something that you go out and you perform and you do. That was, I think, that made it fun."

For many participants, the enjoyment of music was especially felt in the excitement of playing at football games and competing in marching band tournaments. Julia said, "[I] loved, loved going to all the football games." Amara's comment was also representative, "I loved competing. I just loved everything about music and that group and I never even thought of quitting once because I just loved it too much." As a side note it may well be noted that, as music at football games tends to be rather simple when compared to typical wind ensemble literature, these comments might well be interpreted as a combination of the social aspect of music participation (enjoyment of being with friends) along with the nature and enjoyment of music performance.

Another reason for staying in music performance was the opportunity for trips and other out-of-classroom experiences. Sara maintained, "And in high school it was, it gave us that extra thing to do when we could go other places. I mean, if we weren't in the band we wouldn't have gone to Disneyland. And we went to Universal Studios and marched around there," as did Julie, "Going to Vegas, San Diego for like field trips. That was all super fun. Getting out of class early because of football games (laughter). And pep rallies."

As noted above, many of these comments centered around the marching band experience, both in performance at football games (in the stands during the games, and on the field at halftime), and at marching band competitions. It may be that the highly socialized nature of a marching band has a strong inverse impact on young adults' attributions for non-participation in a community music group in the post high school years.

All the participants were able to relate a particularly high point experience in a music performance setting. There was universal agreement on the positive emotions associated with a well-rehearsed and well-received public performance or the accomplishment of a challenging musical task. From Nicole, "and there's that adrenaline rush from performing that is everything. Instrumental music never came easy to me. I had to work really hard to do a piece and there's something about that that feels good. Like, Ok I don't get this very easily but if I work really, really hard I can do it." Bandura's (1977, 1982) research on self-efficacy is relevant here. He stated: "Efficacy expectation is the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the

outcomes" (Bandura, 1977, p. 193). Samantha said, "It's like all these hours that I spent, like when I had to double-tongue, all these hours I've spent like listening to the same parts over and over again until I could finally get that run. It's just that sense of achievement. That sense is like, self-worth, that I get with it." Kevin revealed, "It's just this uber high of just like we were all just so passionate about what we were playing. Feeling what we're doing."

Participants were quick to recall group high moments as well as personal achievement moments during memorable performances. Jessica talked about a group experience, "And [we] just walking off the field with such confidence and hearing the entire stand of other, other schools really cheering you on. I don't think I've matched the feeling like that yet," while Diana mentioned a personal achievement, "And then I just remember being able to hit like all the high notes. There was one part of the show there was a high B flat and then I hit it perfectly in tune and I was just so happy." Julia spoke of how she was cognizant of how the instruments fit together for a musical "ownership" of a moment, "So our part, you hear it throughout the whole song. You hear the tuba and I'm like, got this! And you play it. And then when the trombones start to just sliding up and down, like yeah, we own that song." Amara also chimed in about the group energy of performance, "And when we started performing, it was just so energetic. Being so excited that this strange thing was happening."

The effect on the audience was another common theme that ran through some of the participants' comments. For example Nicole described the ending of a piece, "and

when we finished that piece it was like silence, and I was like, I could just hear the ringing of the chimes throughout the whole room it (whispers) was like . . .yeah."

It is noteworthy that the participants' recollections regarding highlights of performance and social interactions of the music groups rarely found a corresponding place in music outside the school setting. In other words, the school experience was so good that anything else (such as performance in a community music group) would not compare favorably. This "inverse" effect was felt throughout the sessions, bringing up interesting questions for the findings of this research, which will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Social attributions for participation in high school music could be considered primarily as *Cause* explanations in Attribution Theory. *Cause* explanations have to do with external, unintentional attributions ("My friends were all in the band," or "The band was like a family"). It is interesting to note that, when asked to relate experiences or stories, many of the comments were about the pleasure of making music or the task of achieving a musical challenge rather than social aspect of being in the band. These types of experiences related by the participants could be considered the internal/intentional or *Reason* explanations of Attribution Theory.

Question number two, about what kept students in music performance while in high school generated a lively discussion as participants recalled memories of friends, teachers, events, practices, and performances that were significant in their lives. This was in contrast to the participants' discussion of community music groups.

Data and Analysis from Question Number Three

What is your perception of the difficulty level of music in a community performance group (if you are aware of such groups)? Do you think it is harder or easier than what you experienced in high school, or is it about the same? Do you think the difficulty level or the possible audition process is a concern for most people as they consider whether or not to continue playing?

One common theme among the participants was lack of knowledge about community music groups. Most participants were aware that community bands and orchestras exist, but had little or no direct contact with such groups, did not know anyone who was in a community music group, were largely unaware of concerts by the groups, did not know anything about what the difficulty level of the music might be, knew nothing about audition processes, and were unaware of rehearsal schedules. Most had not been encouraged by their high school music teachers to seek out or participate in a community music group. As Andrea said, "And for a while I didn't know there was anything else in our community until my cousin who's two or three, five years younger than me played flute [in a community band]. Arian revealed, "I guess I'm aware of it because my sister participated. But, from my own personal experience, I went through college and then moved up to Berkeley. And, so I never checked into what was actually available to me." This was a common statement.

Adrian found out about a community band near her through a friend, "I didn't really find any in my area because I lived in Oxnard. But I found the Camarillo one only at Christmas time and I think somebody had told me about it. But I didn't see it in like the newspaper. Somebody [who] played [in the band] told me about it." Like others, Gabriella believed such groups were somewhat "hidden" or "under the radar," saying,

"Like I feel like I know that they're out there. But, they were never presented to me. And I feel like I would probably have to dig deep to find them. Even on a university campus Marie did not know anything about the music department because she didn't recall having seen any flyers for concerts. "I went to _____ University. I didn't know it very well and I'm engrossed in school and I actually still don't know to this day if _____ University has a music program or what they do there."[6]

Kellie had a similar experience, "I had no idea until I had already been in college for like at least six months about any sort of community thing that I could have joined. So I think that it really would have helped if they communicated with us." Kevin maintained that his band director would have probably encouraged participation in a community band, but did not go out of his way to inform students, "We had no communication with community groups that I was aware of as a student. There was no community group that we knew of that we could join at all. It really wasn't presented to me or my peers."

Some participants who did know about community bands thought they might be only for older musicians, as Julia said, "I thought they only exist in senior centers. I didn't know that like someone my age could just grab an instrument and enter then. To have something organized through the community through a center I thought was just exclusively for senior citizens." She may have been referring to a "New Horizons" community band (as begun by Dr. Roy Ernst), which has chapters in the greater Los Angeles area. Without a more robust knowledge of community groups the participants did not have much first-hand awareness of the difficulty level of the music being played.

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[6] It should be noted that I am familiar with the music department of university and can assure the reader that the university's music department is visible and active on campus. SB

Even though there was a generally low level of knowledge of, or connection to, local community music groups, there were still opinions about what the difficulty level of the music might be. A common thread of discussion centered on the probability that since community music groups attracted talented players the music was likely to be too challenging. Thus one attribution (*Reason*) for non-participation could be the perception that the difficulty of the music is probably beyond their skill level. Marie said, "I picked up music to see if I could still play it. Ok. I'm back in fifth grade again. Awesome. I can't go play, you know, play with people who have consistently played [after high school] all along and play with them." Kevin admitted, "I don't have the chops anymore to have the time to get back into a community ensemble." Brad echoed a similar concern, "You know, if one of us who hasn't played in 10 or 15 years. Could I walk in and play? Do I want to be in a group where after 10 or 15 years of not playing I could walk in and play? You know, or is the standard higher? If so, am I just setting myself up for embarrassment if I go in and bomb it?" Julia agreed, "It's a lack of information. But, even if I did have information I wouldn't audition. That's lack of confidence. I don't think I'm good enough to be in a community group. My skill level's not what it used to be. Maria had similar concerns, "but just being around all those people [members of a community music group], it's a completely different caliber. They're there because they, you know, have music as a hobby. For a lot of them this music is their entire life now. I haven't tried to join it [referring to a community orchestra in her area]. I heard though that the technical requirements are very high. I hear it's really, really difficult and you have to be completely dedicated to that group. I don't have time for that." Jessica had heard about

the audition process of a community band associated with a community college. “And I remember their audition sessions are really like strict, which makes it scary because I didn’t think I was very good. So I never really gave it much thought.” Jessica maintained, “My perception was community level [music] was going to be a lot harder.” Kevin summed up some of the participants’ comments from his session, “I still think it’s a pretty safe assumption to make for most of us to think that well the people in the community band have been playing longer. So they have to be more expert and so they should be playing more difficult music.” Sara said, “I felt somewhat the same way. I mean we watched the Pierce Ensemble play before and it was complicated music.”

The possibility of an audition was intimidating to some. Arian said, “I think any audition is always a bit intimidating.” Gabriella assented, “It [auditioning] might intimidate people at first. It might be a deterrent at first,” as did Amara, “I guess maybe the auditioning process was a little intimidating for us. And, when they performed it was pretty complex arrangements. That made me a little nervous. That may have scared me away a little.”

Others were more optimistic about their ability to play the music, but less so about the individual practice time needed to keep their skill levels high enough to enjoy the playing. Nicole asserted, “and I mean I could play them [community music pieces] if I worked really hard at them but I’m guessing that’s what a community group would play because nobody wants to go pay money to watch like, you know, an elementary school band.”

Unlike most of the others, one of the participants had actually had some limited

experience with a community band. Having played a Christmas concert with the Camarillo Community Band, Adrian reported that, "It [the music] was probably like [high school] freshman, sophomore level. It was easy for me. I did sight-read it almost perfectly. But it was fun music. It just wasn't terribly difficult for me." Adrian didn't continue with that band after the first few months. This was a different experience than what was reported by others who found the music to be more difficult than what they had in high school. This could be because Adrian's high school group was more advanced than that of the other participants, or that Adrian's musical skills were already higher than her colleagues' skills.

Marie also had been for about a year part of a community symphony orchestra associated with a community college. Her experience was different and more challenging than Adrian's. Maria's words: "So, I played there, and you had to try out. You had to be able to make it on and everything, and that was (softer more timid voice) terrifying. (normal voice) Because I went to the first, try-outs were after the first group meeting. So you go to the first group meeting, and they handed out all of the music and they go 'OK here it is,' and that night is the try-out, after you've played with everybody then you go to your own individual rooms. The instructor comes in and then he goes, 'Ok play your piece.' And it's that music that you just got that night (laughs). OK, so I played it and I got in." This was an orchestra that was associated with a community college, but was open to members of the non-student community. These two different experiences can serve to highlight some of the different practices of community music groups, with a diverse set of aspirations and goals.

The analysis of the data from Question Three indicates these young adults, with one exception, have relatively low awareness of community music groups, are unfamiliar with the procedures and practices of such groups, and generally believe that the music played in these groups tends to be more challenging than what they experienced while in high school.

Data and Analysis From Question Number Four

Talk about issues that make it difficult or unappealing to participate in a community music ensemble. Issues might include the following:

Lack of friends in community ensemble
Costs of participation
Negative high school or college music experience
Time conflicts with other interests and/or responsibilities
Lack of information about community music ensembles
Quality/reputation of community music ensembles
Lack of interest in the style of music played by community music groups

As mentioned in Chapter Three, this question represents the crux of the research. That is why I had two co-readers read and code the responses of each participant. Table Three lists internal and external categories of attributions for non-participation.

Table 3 - Categories of self-described attributions for non-participation in Community Instrumental Ensembles (CIE's)
I. Time constraints A. Internal (too much to do, too many commitments, family, work, education) B. External (inconvenient rehearsal schedule)
II. Financial considerations A. Internal (lack of instrument, costs of maintenance) B. External (fees or tuition, parking, transportation, etc.)
III. Musical considerations A. Internal 1. Decline in musical skill since high school 2. Need to practice (also can be considered a time constraint) 3. Lack of interest in style of music B. External 1. Concern about auditions 2. Music too difficult 3. Music too easy
IV. Social considerations A. Internal (lack of friends participating in CIE) B. External (CIE participants in dissimilar age-group)
V. Awareness / Reputation of CIE A. Internal (lack of interest) B. External (low CIE profile in community, poor reputation of CIE)
VI. Other A. Internal B. External

I. Time Constraints

As a direct response to Question Four, sixteen of the twenty-one participants indicated lack of time as an attribution for non-participation in community music. This was somewhat unexpected because, as stated earlier, one of the accepted narratives

regarding young adult non-participation has to do with the many conflicting commitments in the lives of young adults. However, in viewing the responses of all the participants in the entire transcription (not just Question Four) even participants who did not specifically state lack of time as a direct response to Question Four mentioned on-going commitments in other parts of the interviews. For example, while Sara did not mention lack of time when responding directly to Question Four, she did talk about time-consuming commitments as a part of addressing Question Three. It was common for participants to express implicit concerns about time by stating other time consuming issues.

Regarding the categories of time constraints the majority of the attributions given were internal or *Reason* attributions. That is, they were a result of commitments made, or interests pursued, as a result of a person's inner world of hopes, beliefs, thoughts, or feelings. Commitments to family, friends, education, and career goals reflect a person's inner world, and thus are considered *Reason* attributions. Co-readers also found that six participants mentioned rehearsal schedules to be an issue. This was considered a *Cause* explanation because it comes from beyond the person's commitments to work, education, social circle, or family. One might make an argument that all time considerations could be considered as *Reason* explanations (because they are the result of a person's inner world), or *Cause* explanations (because family, friends, work, and school all exist outside the individual). Certainly there is a continuum rather than a fixed border between these two concepts, but the Internal/External characteristics of these categories fit into the

common understanding and uses of Attribution Theory (Kelly & Michela, 1980; Malle, 1999).

The issue of time conflicts permeated the group sessions, but not to the extent that might have been expected. A common narrative among music educators is that young adults are simply too busy with life to consider adding yet another commitment to their lives. This was borne out in the interviews but was not a major issue with all of the participants. Choices of how to spend one's leisure time (whether in making music, boating, or playing badminton) are a reflection of a person's self-identity and values (Boyd, Juniu, & Tedrick, 1996; Janke, Carpenter, Payne, & Stockard, 2010). McLean and Hurd's (2012) and Smith's (1990) definitions of recreation and leisure include activities undertaken in non-work time, chosen for intrinsic purposes, can involve a degree of commitment, and may include an element of social interaction. This is built on Stebbins's (1982) idea of *serious leisure*, adding the element of skill development; something closely associated with music as recreation, when used as active rather than passive participation. Skill development (or practice) can be seen as related to active music participation as recreation, even if not always done consistently or with focused attention. This kind of active participation takes a commitment of time, but it originates in a person's musical self-identity ("I am a serious amateur musician, therefore I am making the commitment to be in a performing group"). In the focus group sessions there was little self-identification of this nature. The participants all reported having enjoyed their school music experiences and identified themselves as high school musicians, but most did not consider themselves to be sufficiently focused on continued music participation to

make that time commitment a priority.

Table Four shows the coding of Categories I (Time Constraints) and II (Financial Considerations).

Table 4 - Coding of Categories I and II

	I.A.				I.B.				II.A.				II.B.		
NAME	*SB*	*DG*	*RC*		*SB*	*DG*	*RC*		*SB*	*DG*	*RC*		*SB*	*DG*	*RC*
Adrian	x	x	x			x	x								
Amara	x	x	x												
Andrea	x		x				x			x	x				
Arian	x	x	x										x		
Brad	x		x		x	x									
Brandon			x			x			x					x	x
Diana	x	x	x						x		x		x	x	x
Gabriela	x	x	x										x		
Jessica		x	x						x	x	x				
Julia	x	x	x												
Kellie	x	x	x			x			x		x				
Kevin	x	x	x		x		x		x	x	x			x	
Lindsey	x		x												
Marie		x	x			x	x		x	x	x				
Monica	x	x	x				x		x	x					
Nicole		x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x			x	x
Reecie	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x				
Samantha													x	x	x
Sara									x	x	x				
Shannon															
Stefanie															

I. Time constraints

A. Internal (too much to do, too many commitments, family, work, education)

B. External (inconvenient rehearsal schedule)

II. Financial considerations

A. Internal (lack of instrument, costs of maintenance)

B. External (fees or tuition, parking, transportation, etc.)

SB = Stephen Burch, Researcher
DG = Diane Greiser, co-reader
RC = Robert Colonico, co-reader

Regarding the time commitment there was general agreement among the various participants that the "time commitment" would also include practicing outside of the rehearsals. Many recalled the time spent practicing while in high school, and the fact that practice required an additional level of dedication beyond simply attending class or playing in performances. As high school students, many had set aside a time for homework, and practice on an instrument was simply part of the homework. Once outside of the academic environment, however, the issue of practice was not part of a homework routine. Kevin summed it up well: "To clarify about time. It's not just like the one day a week to go for the practice, but it's also practicing outside the group. And like having the time to practice on my own. The good thing about high school is that it's structured practice. It's there and you're going to be practicing here. But then when you're worried about job and college and other things like structure. When am I going to be practicing to keep up my skill? So I think when we think, oh, I could go back if I want to. And there's that fear of, well I'm not good anymore. I'm off on my chops. So is that something I want to tie back in when I don't have the time to practice to gain my skills? To then try out, that could be more challenging than I…and the first wave could be multi-layered. But that's only my time. Not just time to go and obviously rehearse, but to practice on my own skills." The issue of practicing was also reflected later in the section on Musical Considerations.

II. Financial Considerations

As a direct response to Question Four, eleven participants mentioned financial considerations as an attribution for non-participation. Two others, Brad and Lindsey,

mentioned finances as part of their responses to other questions. For some, the financial consideration was a significant barrier. Reecie's preferred instrument was the tuba. She had always used a school instrument, and could not see the justification of committing the funds for an expensive instrument, since it would be used only as a hobby (albeit an enjoyable one). Added to that would be the inconvenience of storing the tuba when it is not being used. Nicole had a similar issue, in that she played mallet percussion (primarily xylophone and marimba) while in high school, and didn't see any practical way to make that part of her life. Sara and Jessica both used school saxophones while in high school, had never purchased an instrument, and so had never thought seriously about continued performance as a life choice. Others mentioned the cost of maintaining an instrument as well as costs or fees associated with playing in a community music group. As with the "lack of time" attributions, these could fall into either an internal explanation (e.g., lack of owning an instrument, cost of maintenance) or an external explanation (e.g., fees or other outside costs of participation).

The categories of lack of time and lack of funds could be combined into a single category (Time and Resource Requirement). It could be argued that lack of time or lack of funds, actually means a lack of interest. This is not meant to be pejorative. It is simply a reflection of the reality of other priorities in participants' lives. Havighurst (1972) spoke of the "tasks" of young adults: completing an education, beginning a career, establishing a family, and expanding a social circle. These tasks consume time and resources. Musical performance or participation, even if enjoyable or desirable, must take a lower priority to

these tasks of young adult life. However, most participants still expressed a desire to find a way to make music-making a part of their lives, even given those competing priorities.

Table Five shows the coding of Category III (Musical Considerations).

Table 5 - Coding of Category III

	III.A.1.				III.A.2.				III.A.3.				III.B.1.				III.B.2.				III.B.3		
NAME	*SB*	*DG*	*RC*		*SB*	*DG*	*RC*		*SB*	*DG*	*RC*		*SB*	*DG*	*RC*		*SB*	*DG*	*RC*		*SB*	*DG*	*RC*
Adrian											x										x	x	
Amara									x	x													
Andrea																							
Arian																							
Brad																							
Brandon																							
Diana			x		x																		
Gabriela																							
Jessica																							
Julia	x	x											x		x		x						
Kellie																							
Kevin	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x				x								
Lindsey																						x	x
Marie	x	x	x				x																
Monica	x		x		x		x						x	x	x								
Nicole	x	x												x	x								
Reecie																							
Samantha																							
Sara																							
Shannon													x	x	x								
Stefanie																							

III. Musical considerations

A. Internal
1. Decline in musical skill since high school
2. Need to practice (also can be considered a time constraint)
3. Lack of interest in style of music

B. External
1. Concern about auditions
2. Music too difficult
3. Music too easy

III. Musical Considerations

Questions Three and Four both addressed some of the same issues (of awareness and perceived difficulty of music) so some of the data in Question Four is similar to that found in Question Three. Participants attributed lack of skill as a concern, second only to time and resource conflicts. Arian, Gabriella, Jessica, Amara, Monica, Lindsey, Reecie, Shannon, and Stefanie expressed concerns about the possibility of an audition as part of their responses to Question Three, even if they were unsure if auditions were normally required. Julia, Monica, Nicole, and Shannon had similar thoughts in response to Question Four. Some were sure they would not want to attempt an audition if one were required.

In response to the earlier Question Three (about the perceived difficulty of the music compared to their high school music) Jessica, Sara, Monica, Lindsey, and Stefanie indicated they thought the music would be more difficult. This sentiment was not directly reflected in responses to Question Four (II.B.), by anyone except Julia, and then only coded as such by one reader. This was somewhat surprising because the question specifically mentioned difficulty of music as being a possible reason for non-participation. It may have been that the participants who felt this way did not mention it a second time as it had already been brought up in the previous question.

Related to the concern about the difficulty of music was the issue of declining musical skill. The longer the time since playing, the more precipitous the perceived decline would be. Monica said, “You’re at your peak in high school. It’s all downhill from there!” From the context of the statement, and from the group’s laughter that

followed, it can be seen that this was meant to be a somewhat humorous exaggeration. However, it was obvious that it struck a chord with the others in the session.

Concern about musical ability also included the necessity of regular practice to bring musical skills up to the expected level for performance. This was also a factor in the "lack of time" scenario above. The need for practice was therefore connected both to the lack of time attribution and the lack of skill attribution. Gates (1991) categorized non-professional musicians into groups he named as amateurs, hobbyists, recreationists, and dabblers. According to Gates people in the amateur/hobbyist groups view their participation as *serious leisure* while the recreationist/dabbler groups view it more as *play*. The participants' comments regarding the challenges of keeping up their instrumental skills indicate that they view participation in a community ensemble group as something that would require a higher level of commitment beyond that of a recreationist or dabbler. As Monica said, "I'd have to practice for like a year before I could tryout for a community band."

The categories of concerns about auditions, difficulty of music, declining skill level, and the need to practice, could be combined into a single category (Musical Skill Requirement). The two broad categories of Time and Resource Requirement and Musical Skill Requirement constituted the majority of attributions for non-participation.

IV. Social Considerations

As was seen in responses to Question Two, the social connection was a significant aspect of participation in high school music performance. This factor was however not as pronounced as an attribution for young adult non-participation. Eight participants stated

lack of friends in a community music group or lack of a social connection as part of the reason for non-participation. This may seem incongruous when one considers that the social connection was the primary reason given for participation in high school music. If the social connection was the most important reason given for high school participation, why then was lack of social connection not the primary reason for non-participation beyond high school? The answer to this may be found in Havighurst's task of young adulthood (Havighurst, 1972). Expanding a social circle is one of those tasks. Expanding a social circle can take place in a variety of circumstances. Young adults are no longer in a highly structured high school setting, where band practice is every day, and also sometimes before and after school. In a community group there is normally one practice per week, or less. In addition, a community music group encompasses a much wider age range than a high school music group. Lack of a social connection could therefore be considered more of an outcome (of lack of participation) rather than a cause.

Age differences were also mentioned. Adrian (who had played briefly in a community band after high school graduation) said, "Everyone else was so much older than I, and so I didn't really feel like I fit in." According to Erikson & Smesler (1980) one of the young adult tasks is establishing a social circle. If the participants in community instrumental ensembles are mostly of an older demographic (Busch, 2005; Mantie, 2012) this may mean that there is little social incentive for young adults to actively participate in an ensemble.

Beyond the age difference, there was also the memory of a positive social connection while in high school and the fear that a similar connection would not be made

in a community group. Shannon said, “I had such a positive experience in [high school] band that I didn’t want to go to a community band where it wasn’t going to be the same.”

V. Awareness / Reputation of Community Instrumental Ensemble

The issue of awareness of community instrumental ensembles was initially covered in Question Three, which asked participants to speak about their perceptions of the level of music challenge or difficulty in a community instrumental ensemble, as compared to what was played in their own high school group. As noted in the analysis of Question Three there was general consensus among most participants that they believed the music level would be more difficult in a community group than in their respective high school groups. Also noted in the responses to Question Three was the low level of awareness of local community music groups in general.

All of the participants had some awareness of community bands or orchestras, but little knowledge of where a community instrumental music ensemble might be or when the rehearsals or performances were. Specifically in response to Question Four eight participants (Arian, Diana, Gabriela, Julia, Lindsey, Marie, Shannon, and Stefanie) talked about their low awareness of community music groups, or how those groups did not register high in the participants’ environments. Others in the groups also spoke of the low profile that community music groups have. A common sentiment was that community music groups were there for anyone who wanted to find them, but that they did not do much to expand their reach into their communities.

VI. Other Attributions

In addition to issues of time, money, and social connections, there were other attributions for non-participation. One of these issues was the fact that some high school teachers were less inclined to support students' participation in outside groups due to the possibility of time conflicts and/or emotional buy-in. Gabriella reported, "A lot of our members wanted to do the L.A. Marching Band for the Rose Bowl, but our director was always [saying], 'I don't want you guys to do that. It's going to shift focus from our group onto their group.' " It may be that if a music group outside the local school setting offers something that the school group doesn't offer, then it can appear more fun, more challenging, and more rewarding than participation in the school's music group. This is especially so when the students realize that the community band has no other requirement than simply showing up and playing the music, as opposed to a school class in which teachers are required to take attendance, give tests or other assessments, give other types of assignments, and issue grades. This can therefore be a disincentive for music educators to actively encourage their students to participate in a community music group. The resulting high school students' lack of connection with, or awareness of, the music of their community might therefore be a *Cause* attribution for non-participation in community music by young adults. This brings up issues of equity and access as well as band directors' viewpoints regarding "competing" music groups that will be discussed in Chapter Five.

An additional issue for non-participation had to do with the influence of parents. Diana reported that her parents had been supportive of her participation while in high

school, but when she went to college her parents had discouraged her participation in a college band because it might interfere with her academic work.

A negative college band experience was reported by Arian: “The instructor was very negative to the point where if people weren’t playing things properly she would get angry. Knock over music stands. You know, yell at people.” This experience was not reported by other participants, but it may demonstrate that expectations in a college band could be more stringent than in a high school band. This perception may in turn influence the non-participants’ perceptions of what a community band might be like.

Table Six shows the coding of Categories IV (Social Considerations), V (Lack of awareness / reputation of community music ensembles, and VI (Other). In analyzing the responses to Question Four the codings of the co-readers were in general agreement with my coding. The majority of attributions for non-participation turned out to be internal, but external factors also played a role in choices for non-participation.

Table 6 - Coding of Categories IV, V, and VI

	IV.A.			IV.B.			V.A.			V.B.			VI.A.			VI.B.		
NAME	*SB*	*DG*	*RC*	*SB*	*DG*	*RC*	*SB*	*DG*	*RC*	*SB*	*DG*	*RC*	*SB*	*DG*	*RC*	*SB*	*DG*	*RC*
Adrian	x		x	x	x	x												
Amara	x	x	x															
Andrea																x		
Arian											x				x	x		x
Brad																		
Brandon																		
Diana										x			x	x		x		
Gabriela							x											
Jessica	x																	
Julia							x			x	x	x						
Kellie																		
Kevin																		
Lindsey								x							x			x
Marie	x	x	x								x							
Monica				x		x												
Nicole															x			
Reecie																		
Samantha	x	x													x			
Sara																		
Shannon	x	x	x							x	x	x				x		
Stefanie	x	x	x							x	x	x						

IV. Social considerations
A. Internal (lack of friends participating in CIE)
B. External (CIE participants in dissimilar age-group)

V. Lack of awareness / Reputation of CIE's
A. Internal (lack of interest)
B. External (low CIE profile in community, poor reputation of CIE)

VI. Other
A. Internal
B. External

Data and Analysis from Question Number Five

In what ways do you still engage with music? (This could include going to concerts, playing in a casual band with friends, playing in other types of music groups, singing in a choir, doing computer music, etc.)

Participants' responses to this question were wide-ranging, but fell primarily into two categories: "listening" and "participating," both of which had broader meanings. "Listening" included going to concerts, as well as causal background listening on the radio or music devices. It also included more specific listening as a result of previous music experience. For example, Julia said that she is able to hear specific brass parts in a piece of music as a result of having played a brass instrument. Most of the participants reported a higher level of musical understanding in what they heard than if they had not been involved in music performance. Most also said that they listened to and appreciated a broader range of musical styles than their non-musical peers. This mirrored findings by Goldman (2011), Patterson (1985), and Persinger (2001) that participants in band or orchestra had a broader preference of musical styles than non-participants. Sara said that in her work she sometimes made computer presentations in which she felt she was more able to judiciously choose the right music for a presentation. Several participants indicated that they listened more closely to movie scores, sometimes noting how the music supported or did not support the visuals on the screen.

"Participation" included participants who play music for their children (Marie and Monica), who are involved in musical theater or dance (Andrea and Nicole), or who sing in a church choir (Brad). Other types of "participation" included playing the piano or guitar. One participant (Brandon) reported having an electronic drumset, guitar, and

keyboard that he plays occasionally. While almost all of the participants reported some type of continuing music engagement, two of them (Diana and Jessica) said on one hand that they were "not involved" in music to any significant degree anymore, but then also spoke of listening and going to concerts.

As a follow-up to the last question, I asked participants about any plans they might have for future music making in their lives. On this there was general interest in one day picking up where they left off. Most participants reported they would like to find a way to re-enter the world of music performance in some way that would provide for an enjoyable experience but without negatively impacting the other facets of their very busy lives. Maria said, "It's always something [playing again] that I've imagined myself doing." Gabriella agreed, "I do miss playing. Yeah. I mean, I have three trumpets at home and a tuba at home sitting there. I miss playing." All of the participants said at one point that they would like to find a way to make music a greater part of their lives again if it did not interfere with their higher priorities.

Findings

Data in qualitative research are not generalizable to the broader population, but they do give us some insights into the issues involved (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2007, Creswell, 2007, Lichtman, 2010). The primary question in this research is to what young adult, former music students attribute their choices about non-participation in community music. The findings can be summarized as follows:

1. *Reason* attributions of young adult priorities of finishing an education, establishing a career, finding life partners, or starting families take a high priority

(Time and Resource Requirement), leave little time for leisure activities that are not also somehow related to those priorities.

2. *Cause* attributions (that originate from outside the person) such as the perceived difficulty level of the music, and *reason* attributions (internal) of declining music ability, and the need for practice (Musical Skill Requirement) are a significant barrier to young adult participation in community music groups.

3. Financial considerations (both internal and external) present an additional, but less significant barrier to participation in community music groups.

4. Young adults with high school music experience value that experience and would take the opportunity to replicate it in some way if it did not conflict with the priorities mentioned above.

5. Procedures and practices of most community music groups do not easily fit into the modern lives of many young adults.

6. Community music groups generally have a low profile in the lives of young adults. People who want to find out about such groups are able to do so, but individuals who may only be mildly interested are not readily knowledgeable about the various groups.

Participants in this research reported having largely positive high school music education experiences, with both social and musical aspects mentioned often as reasons for those positive experiences. If people had a rewarding experience, then one might expect them to want to continue or duplicate that experience in some way. Findings of this research indicate that young adult, former high school music students do indeed have

a desire to enjoy making music in their lives, but don't see a readily available means to accomplish this.

The attributions one might expect of career and family obligations were supported by the participants' responses, but this study revealed some additional factors. The attributions regarding low awareness of, and limited interaction with, community ensemble groups may serve as a point of departure for re-evaluation of traditional approaches to high school music education. Insights from this research will be explored in the next chapter.

The issues of social justice, equity, and non-standard community music groups were not a central part of the focus group sessions. There were two participants who had some connection with other types of music groups. Brad was part of a church choir, and Nicole was occasionally involved in a musical theater group as a parent of a young actor. The participants had all been members of traditional school instrumental performing groups, taught by teachers who themselves had been trained in traditional methods. I believe this study indicates that music teachers may have little interest in reaching out to traditional community groups, and even less interest in non-traditional groups. This may be one reason why music students quit making music after leaving school. They have been driven to succeed in only a very narrow musical experience (so that the teachers can claim additional trophies?), and have not been exposed to the rich variety of music making as part of their school curriculum. This is similar to what Higgins (2012) wrote of in observing participants in a community Samba band who previously had formal (traditional) music training. Their experiences "pinpointed a lack of creative expression

and rigidity embedded in a music education system that insisted on Western classical tradition" (p. 73). One purpose of this study was to demonstrate the lack of connection between current music education practices and the musical landscape outside of the school environment, and to suggest ways in which that connection could be developed. This will be further discussed in chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE: EXITING THOUGHTS

Conclusions from this Research

I began this project with typical beliefs about attributions of young adult former high school music students for non-participation in community music groups after their high school years. The traditional assumption is that young adults are too busy with finishing their education, establishing their careers, starting families, creating their own identities, and building social networks to want to invest time, energy, and resources into participation in a community instrumental ensemble group. Another supposition was that an extended gap in time between the end of high school participation and possible participation in community music would result in anxiety regarding the skill level needed for enjoyable participation. Both of these assumptions were confirmed by the data from the interviews.

There were, however some opinions that I previously held that were not supported by the data. The first of these was the level of knowledge about community music groups. In this area I must confess a certain amount of what I call "community music myopia," which needs to be explained. For over 20 years as a public high school music teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District I have been highly interested in community instrumental music groups that operate outside of the high school setting. During that time I have proactively sought opportunities for my students (and for myself) to play in larger, more accomplished community music groups than what was available in a typical high school in the Los Angeles District. To me this seemed to be a responsible course of action for a music teacher to take. I encouraged my students to participate in community

instrumental music ensembles. In addition to this, I also have participated in several community music groups as a performer and conductor over the years. Because of this I developed what I referred to above as "community music myopia." I was so focused on both in-school and out-of-school performance that it was hard for me to understand that others would not also be similarly focused. I was unaware of the relatively low profile that some community music groups actually have in their respective communities. I mistakenly assumed that music teachers and students would have some knowledge of, and interest in, community music groups in their areas. In fact, it appeared that some school band directors may feel a threat regarding other groups. Whereas the community group may value music for the sake of music, the school director may implicitly value procedures and policies, all part of schooling, not education. Hence, some band directors tend to become administrators where their love of schooling is pronounced and validated. This is a generalization, but may be one possible answer. However, I do not want to go too far in the other direction and imply that the participants were wholly unaware of community music groups and the music they play. The fact that most of them had some working knowledge about community music groups was obvious from the discussions.

Another area of unexpected information generated by these focus group interviews was how the participants valued their music performance experience. Music teachers commonly have the experience of seeing students' pleasure and excitement when they achieve a new musical goal, master a musical challenge, or successfully accomplish a musical performance. It may, therefore, be forgivable if a teacher comes to think of the music itself as the most important aspect of "being in the band." The data

from these interviews do not bear this out. The enjoyment of music was high on the list of reasons for staying in music performance classes in high school, but the overwhelming emotional connections to the music program were the social ties more so than the music itself. Following from this, it may be helpful for community music groups to focus on the idea of "community" as much or more so than on the idea of "music group" when seeking to raise their profile to the community at large. It may be helpful to examine the factors in other community groups (scouts, churches, service groups) that contribute to growth or decline of those groups.

Most of the participants expressed a desire (at least within the focus groups) to resume their music-making in some way, but this was not a major, driving issue for them. This also has implications for community music groups. Young adults who already have a strong desire to perform will have already sought out community music performance groups. Rather than expend their energies on a relatively small number of potential recruits who are going to seek them out anyway, community music groups might rather look for ways to attract and accommodate the more numerous, less committed, but still interested, young adults.

Ideas for Consideration

Based upon the data presented and the analyses of the data, I suggest the following ideas for consideration:

High school music teachers could look for ways to encourage students to participate in non-school community music groups. This can be done while still keeping the students' priorities in the school music program. For example, the music departments

of community colleges in my area generally have a policy of close cooperation with the local high schools. High school students who want to enroll in a community college band or orchestra must submit documentation that they are involved in their own school's music program. The reason for this policy is to keep high school music students connected first to their own school's performance class. Exceptions are made for situations in which there is no comparable ensemble at the local high school. If a high school does not have a string orchestra a student violist need not show that she is involved with the high school music program in order to join the Moorpark Community College Symphony. If this policy is known and applied, high school teachers can have confidence that a student's participation in a community college ensemble would not jeopardize the student's participation in the school's ensemble.

Another suggestion is that high school teachers demonstrate the value of lifelong participation by themselves being part of a community instrumental ensemble. Based on my own experience, and on my observations of excellent music teachers, students who see and hear their own teachers involved in community ensembles are given a real life example of lifelong participation and learning. Whenever possible, teachers should lead by example. This of course may not always be practical, given that the same realities of modern life that the participants spoke of also apply to music teachers. Still, I maintain that music teachers should find meaningful ways to engage with music outside of the school setting, and communicate this to their students.

High school teachers often incorporate some kind of recruitment outreach to their middle school feeder programs, with such things as combined concerts, workshops, or

other collaborative efforts. This same activity can be done in the "forward" direction by seeking to arrange similar experiences for the high school students with a local community group. Conductors of community instrumental music groups are often very happy to visit local high schools to talk about their groups. High school music teachers may want to invite conductors of local community music groups to do a clinic or other type of educational experience with their high school performance groups. Collaborative events between high school and community groups can foster an ongoing relationship that is beneficial to both groups. Students with more advanced musical skills gain the advantage of playing higher-level music than what might be in the high school's curriculum. Those students then bring some of that experience and learning to the school band or orchestra.

The above suggestions are for high school music teachers. There are also steps that community ensemble groups could take. Rather than wait for high schools to reach out to them, conductors and members of community instrumental performance groups could proactively contact local high schools and seek ways to support the music teacher and the school's program with workshops or collaborative performances. Care should be taken to assure the school music teacher that the community group's efforts are for promoting the school music program, and not for drawing away top students. Symbiotic relationships should be bi-mutual, reciprocal, and conjoined in mission and vision. Community music groups could look for ways to organize themselves to make participation by young adults more appealing. This may include actions steps, such as providing babysitting, having fewer rehearsals prior to a performance (rather than long

commitments of weekly rehearsals), and choosing music that is readily accessible and playable. This may however carry some costs, as some high-level groups may not want to "lower their standards" or play less challenging and satisfying musical selections. Each community music group needs to find and build upon its own unique identity. Repertoire should also include culturally diverse music that broadens the horizons of music both for the performers and the listeners. A community orchestra collaboration with a local rock band, gamelan group, ukulele club, or other community music group could provide a rich musical experience for everyone involved. For example, the Moorpark College Community Orchestra has played concerts with local rock and bluegrass bands as part of their summer music in the park series. This kind of collaboration should be the norm rather than an anomaly. Too often, community bands and orchestras have little to do with other community groups, to the detriment of all. The enthusiastic response of the players and audiences at collaborative events with the Moorpark Orchestra should serve as a springboard for similar experiences.

Community music groups can continue to build a more visible community profile by using the social media platforms that are an integral part of modern young adult lives. It might be worthwhile for members of a community ensemble to form a working group to heighten its online and social media visibility. In building a community profile a music group should place a high value on reaching potential performers who may not have had the economic resources that many students from a middle or upper socio-economic situation had. The issues of equity and access to resources for all students is an ongoing one for music educators, and these issues demand serious consideration if music teachers

are to be at the forefront of advancing social justice. This will be explored more fully in the next section.

Implications Regarding Equity and Access

Because the cases in this study were primarily wind ensemble players, it might appear that post-secondary musical opportunities are limited to that field. On the contrary, implications of this research can also be viewed from the perspective of issues regarding equity and access in music education. For example, community bands tend to draw from a specific demographic; a demographic that historically has had greater access to the standard classical Western music tradition. As previously noted in Chapter One, the majority of community ensemble members tend to be White, educated, and upper middle class. Does this mean that these community ensemble members went to high schools that reflected these demographics? If so, then is it reasonable to conclude that the schools and students of a higher socio-economic situation (HSES) had resources not available to students in less affluent (lower socio-economic situation, or LSES) schools? In LSES schools the students predominantly use school instruments and have limited access to private lessons. There are traditional bands, orchestras, and jazz bands in many of these LSES southern California schools, but both the size and musical skill levels of HSES schools are generally greater than that of most LSES schools. The LSES schools are therefore "competing" with HSES schools on an uneven playing field.

An example of this can be seen in southern California. Most of the higher socio-economic situated schools in southern California lie outside of the Los Angeles Unified

School District (LAUSD).[7] School bands in these more affluent school districts typically participate in music festivals sponsored by the Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association (SCSBOA). Ensembles participating in SCSBOA festivals must play musical selections from a prescribed list. Music judges from the SCSBOA must pass a series of benchmarks to be a certified judge. School ensembles in the LAUSD more often participate in festivals sponsored by the Arts Education Branch of the LAUSD (if indeed they participate in festivals at all). There is no prescribed list from which musical selection must be made. Judges are chosen by the festival host and need no specialized certification. The published judging criteria in most LAUSD festivals is similar to that of the SCSBOA, but there is no data on whether those judging criteria are adhered to as strictly in both entities.[8]

The outcome of this long-established practice is a situation in which LSES schools are forced into a *box* of traditional music education (of large ensembles such as concert bands, marching bands, orchestras, and jazz bands) but lacking some of the cultural capital (access to private lessons, support for practice at home, ownership of instruments) that makes the large ensemble an effective model. This presents a dilemma. Significant resources of time and money are required for students to own their own instruments, take private lessons, and have the family support for daily practice. Students who do not have those resources and family support will often not be able to play at the

[7] There are notable exceptions to this generalization: El Camino Real HS, Taft HS, Pacific Palisades HS

[8] There is, however, anecdotal evidence that the judging in an LAUSD festival is somewhat more lenient than in an SCSBOA festival. I have had *off the record* conversations with SCSBOA and LAUSD colleagues who believe this to be true.

level of students who do have those resources. If on the one hand LSES schools abandon the large ensemble model for something more achievable and culturally relevant, are they then open to the accusation of providing less of a high quality music education experience? Conversely, if they pursue the large ensemble model do they then they risk the debilitating experience of lower scores at music festivals? Or do they simply not participate in music festivals at all? If the students do not get the benefits[9] of festival participation, is this seen as yet another example of how LSES students are deprived of enriching educational experiences? This is one reason why the LAUSD instituted its own festival system. From this perspective, one might argue that the current state of music education in southern California provides a real-life reflection of the effects of class stratification in society. It is of course beyond the scope of this research to attempt to solve the problems of inequity in music education, but issues in this research bring some of these questions to the forefront. At the very least, an argument could be made that teachers of LSES schools have a greater responsibility to encourage and facilitate student participation in community music outside the confines of the school music program, and to institute programs that more closely align with students' interests. I believe music education policy makers in southern California and particularly in the Los Angeles Unified School District should engage in a systematic, thorough review of ways in which music education can connect with community music groups, both traditional and non-traditional, with meaningful preparation and empowerment for participation in music that

[9] The question of whether there are positive benefits from festival participation is beyond the scope of these comments, but it should be noted that many questions have been raised over the past 50 years about this issue (Wunderlich, 1951).

goes beyond the limits of traditional ensembles. To a limited extent, this is already happening on a local level at some schools. A few LAUSD high schools offer classes in Mariachi band, guitar, songwriting, and computer music, but this is not system-wide. It is interesting to note that the Arts Education Branch of the district does not keep readily-available records on what schools are offering classes outside of the traditional ones. At the University of California, Northridge (located within the same geographic area of the LAUSD) music education students are able to take classes in guitar, drum circle, taiko drum ensemble, along with integrating activities such as playing by ear and improvisation. Music education students are also required to take a class in music technology and a jazz improvisation class. This is in addition to the requirements of the state of California for music education majors. There is also an active community service outreach program, with university music students participating in community groups (for example a local bagpipe group). This represents some progress in the right direction, but I maintain that connections to the community music scene should be an agreed-upon value, reflected in the requirements for graduation, rather than something only for those who are interested in pursuing it.

Advocacy Regarding Equity and Access

There are four major areas of inequality that low-income students face regarding the issues raised in this research: 1) private lessons, 2) ownership of instruments, 3) practice support, and 4) transportation. Each of these will be discussed with a view toward practical, achievable steps that could mitigate some of these inequalities. These

relate directly to the issues of community music participation in the broader sense, and specifically to participation in community instrumental ensembles. Following these steps can also increase the achievement of students while in their school ensembles.

Access to private, individualized, focused instruction from a specialist in a specific instrument is a significant barrier to high achievement for low-income students. Private lessons are expensive. Public school music teachers cannot hope to provide private lessons for all the students in their programs. Additionally, even if there were time to do so, no teacher is a specialist in every instrument. There are, however, four ideas that could help bridge that gap: 1) teacher-initiated mini-private lessons, 2) high school to middle school coaching, 3) scholarship donations, and 4) pre-service music teachers. I believe these practices should be a standard part of the public school music education experience. These four ideas still fall within the traditional ensembles. Ideas for connecting with non-traditional ways of making music will also be discussed below.

Teacher-initiated mini-private lessons are simply 15-minute one-on-one sessions with students. Some teachers are able to give mini-private lessons after school for wind and string players. A letter can be sent home to the parents/guardians of students in the performing classes (concert band and string orchestra) informing them that the teacher would be giving 15-minute one-on-one lessons. Students may or may not be required to participate, but are encouraged to do so. Accommodations or exceptions can be made for students involved in sports or whose family situations made it difficult. (For example, some students needed to leave campus right away after school because they had to pick up younger siblings from elementary school and take care of them until their mother,

father, or other caretaker home from work in the evening.) The realities of scheduling, after-school commitments, staff meetings, and other conflicts may not make this practical for every situation. However, this could still be a good starting place for giving students an experience with focused, individualized instruction. Public school music teachers cannot be experts in every instrument, but most of us are very competent in a wide range of instruments up to at least an intermediate level. No two school music programs are exactly alike, so this is not a recommendation that all teachers follow this model. I believe, however, that school music teachers should make private instruction for their students one of their priorities, and that school districts should support that practice. My own district, (Los Angeles) has some paid after-school program positions, which include some of my LAUSD secondary music teacher colleagues.

Another opportunity for focused, individual attention can come through high school to middle school coaching. As with teacher-initiated mini-private lessons, this is not always practical, but it can work in some situations. Some high schools have a community service requirement for graduating high school seniors. One way to accomplish the community service is for high school musicians to offer one-on-one instrumental music coaching to middle school music students. This gives teaching experience to high school students and focused, individual attention to middle school musicians. One caution for this idea is that it assumes (perhaps erroneously) that the high school students are competent enough to offer pedagogically sound instruction. This type of program can work, but it needs to be monitored by the certificated teachers (both high school and middle school). There should be training sessions for high school students on

how to coach middle school players. There are also the issues of transportation to the middle school, parental approval forms, and supervision by the middle school teacher to consider. Even with these challenges this practice can be useful in a variety of situations.

A third idea for bridging the economic status gap in relation to private lessons is seeking (and making) donations for private lesson scholarships. This is currently being done by some music teachers in Los Angeles who are members of the Los Angeles Area Secondary Music Teachers Association (LAASMTA). Students audition for one of a limited number of scholarships for private lessons. Donations for the lessons are made by teachers and other interested individuals. This can also be done at the school level. Teachers might want to consider making a yearly donation to the school music program of an amount that would be used for private lessons for an exceptional student. The scholarship can be awarded to the student who shows the most promise and likelihood of home practice support, with the funds being paid directly to the private teacher.

The first three ideas above are very limited and context-specific. I do not intend them as something that all teachers should always do in every situation. They are merely ideas (not original with me) that can make a small difference for some students. This is somewhat similar to the mantra of "Think Globally, Act Locally" that one sees regarding various societal and environmental causes. This next idea, however, is something that is much bigger, should be adopted nationwide, and would be beneficial to thousands of low-income students. This is what might be called the "Think Globally" part of the mantra mentioned above. Part of every university's music teacher preparation should be the requirement that all music students preparing for a career in music education must (as

part of their student teaching) provide free, one-on-one lessons in their instrument of specialty to a given number of students in their respective student teaching assignments. This might already be a requirement in some institutions, but I believe it can and must be a standard part of every music teacher preparation program. Student teaching usually lasts one or two semesters. They typically observe the certificated teacher in class, then prepare and deliver lessons under the guidance of the certificated teacher. If student teachers were also required to give private lessons to selected students, this would greatly expand the opportunities for low-income students to have some access to private lessons.

A second concern regarding equity and access is individual ownership of instruments. This is a problem especially as it relates to continued participation beyond the school years. Most low-income high school music students use instruments that are provided by the school. To purchase a high quality, durable instrument capable of sustained use into the adult years can be a sizable investment. There are no easy answers to this dilemma, but there are some steps that the music education community might take to address this issue: 1) unused instruments, 2) music education foundations, and 3) school district support.

In my own experience, I sometimes encounter people who say that they played in the band while they were in school, don't play anymore, and still have an instrument that their parents bought them when they were in school. I haven't done an organized study of how many instruments might be up in the attic or down in the basement, but this would be a possible avenue for getting instruments donated to low-income students. One problem that arises in this idea is the notion that the used instruments are for the poor

kids while the new instruments are for the rich kids, thus perpetuating the same kinds of access and equity problems that we are trying to cope with. Even with this potential problem the idea might be a path for some students to own an instrument that they would not otherwise be able to afford. If it were possible for the students or the students' families to "pay" for the instrument in some way (by volunteering at an event, for example) this would perhaps be better than a simple donation. Students who have in some way "paid" for the instrument might be more likely to place a high personal value on their own instrument.

There are music education foundations that provide music instruments to low-income schools. The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation is one example. The Mr. Holland's Foundation was established in 1996 by Michael Kaman (1948–2003), the filmscore composer for the movie Mr. Holland's Opus. Like other similar foundations, its primary function is to provide support for school music education programs. They receive donations of from individuals and corporations. Some of these are donations of instruments (both new and used). I believe an argument can be made that these foundations should seek ways (in a thoughtful and responsible manner) to make some of these donated instruments available to low-income students as personal rather than school-owned instruments. This would require a new way of thinking for some of these foundations, along with methods for deciding which applicants would receive the grants. Advocating for and starting a new process such as this is cumbersome and time-consuming but it might be a worthwhile avenue to consider.

School district support can also have a connection with student-owned

instruments. Musical instruments need to be maintained and occasionally repaired. The Los Angeles district has its own instrument repair shop. Smaller districts usually have contracts with instrument repair facilities. In the L.A. district the instrument repair shop will only repair instruments owned by a school in the district. Student-owned instruments cannot be sent to the shop for repair. I believe it would be a reasonable use of school district resources to allow the shop to make repairs of a student-owned instrument if the student is involved in the school music program. This would enable students to secure (at a reasonable cost) an instrument that could be usable but needs some repairs. This could have the longer-term effect of more student ownership of instruments. Higher rates of student ownership of instruments may benefit both the students and the school music program in general.

A third area of concern regarding equity and access for low-income students is that of practice support at home. Students who live in single family homes, with each child having their own room, a personal computer, their own instrument, and private lessons have many advantages that low-income students can only dream of. When parents pay for private lessons they expect their child to practice. Middle and higher income students more often have their own "space" where they can practice, whereas low-income students who live in a small apartment with several siblings (or even multiple families in a single apartment) have a much more challenging situation when it comes to practicing their instrument at home. As with the other issues above, there is no single, universal solution to this problem. There are, however, two things that many music educators can do to deal with the problem. First, they can address the issue from

the outset. If practice outside of the classroom is a requirement in a performance class (such as turning in practice logs) the teacher should be aware of the challenges students face. A simple way to know this is to ask each student, and separately the parents or caretakers, to write down what challenges they face for practicing at home. If the parents or caretakers of students are aware of the value the teacher places on individual practice, this can have the effect of increasing parental support for practicing. This will not work in all situations, but it can be a start, even in low-income neighborhoods. Again, this is coming from my own anecdotal experience, but I believe that low-income parents want their children to succeed just as much as higher income parents do.

The next thing that teachers can do is make time and space after school, before school, and at lunchtime for their students to practice. This also requires teacher flexibility and in some cases re-arrangement of priorities regarding classroom space, time commitments, and other resources. Like other ideas put forward here, it is context-specific; what works for one situation may not be practical in another. Regardless of those differences and challenges, I believe that teachers should place a high value on individual practice, and to the extent practical, arrange their workflow and use of resources to reflect that value.

The issue of transportation goes far beyond what is normally discussed in the academic arena of music education. For that reason, a case could be made for leaving it out of this discussion, but I maintain that access to safe, affordable, reliable transportation is essential not only to a fully integrated music education experience (which includes at least some participation in community music), but to expanded opportunity for economic

and social empowerment. Specifically as the issue relates to the public school setting, I believe that school districts should be required to fund transportation to school-related music experiences to the same extent that transportation to sporting events is funded. One reason why some students don't participate in community music (usually evening) rehearsals is that they cannot get to the venues unless their parents are able to drive them there. If a school can regularly send the wrestling team, the football team, the baseball team, the softball team, the soccer team, the basketball team, the swim team, the water polo team, the track team, the volleyball team (most teams of both girls and boys) across town for games and competitions, then the values of equal access should be applied to those in involved in music. If a group of music students could get school-funded transportation to participate in a local community band or orchestra, this would have far-reaching effects for those students, the community music groups, and the school music program.

To take it a logical step further, support for interacting with community music groups should include groups that are non-standard (such as drum circles, bluegrass fiddle groups, ukulele clubs) as well as standard groups such as wind ensembles and classical orchestras. Since this study has indicated little connection between school ensembles and their counterparts in community bands, it therefore seems imperative that teachers should seek connections with community music that might actually be of more interest to young adults after their school experience. Access to reliable and affordable transportation should also include support for interacting with non-traditional community music groups. In this way, both teachers and students would have a broader and richer

music education experience, exposing students to the much larger world of music in their communities, beyond the narrow confines of the band or orchestra.

Finally, an effective leveler (sometimes) of access and equality is technology. If access to the Internet and a home computer was once a luxury it is now so ubiquitous that even most low-income households have computers and Internet access. There are many music education and practice applications available on a variety of platforms. One of these is SmartMusic, a music practicing application developed by MakeMusic, the company that also makes Finale music notation software. Students can get SmartMusic for a relatively low annual cost, but this assumes that the teacher knows how to use it and can effectively put it into practice. School districts cannot (and should not) force all students to purchase materials and software, so students' use of technology in music education should never be a requirement of participation in music class. Nevertheless the use of high quality, affordable music technology can be a great help in student achievement. The Los Angeles district is currently reviewing ways to get each student a computer or tablet. This will probably be standard practice for public schools in the next decade. Music teachers must become knowledgeable and competent in the use of music technology in order to help their students achieve at a high level. School districts should provide ongoing training for music teachers in the practical, daily uses of current technology for the music classroom.

Suggestions for Further Research

Case studies of community music groups that have a relatively higher number of young adults can provide specific practices that lead to greater participation by young

adults. In one of the focus groups there was mention of a community band that did not fit the "expected" mold of being primarily for older musicians playing more difficult music, with long-term commitments expected of its members. Rather, this band (the Camarillo Community Band) is a loose association of about 200 *members* who might or might not play at any given performance. There is no permanent conductor. There are no audition requirements. Guest conductors are chosen by a board of directors for each concert. The music is within the skill level of most competent high school players. There are three or four rehearsals for each concert. Members indicate their willingness and availability for a particular concert date with its rehearsal schedule.

This model seems to address some of the attributions for non-participation (inconvenient rehearsal schedule, or concern about auditions, for example) by participants in the focus group sessions involved in this research. There are also many groups (such as the Blue Devils Drum Corps) modeled on the school marching band that have large numbers of young adult participants. Case study research of similar groups may provide additional ideas that can be used by other community music groups seeking to attract more young adult members.

Quantitative research (by survey) on young adult former high school musicians on reasons for non-participation in community music can provide data from a larger sample. The questions asked and the issues raised in the present qualitative study could be formed into a more extensive survey that would give generalizable information to the music education profession and to community music practitioners. This is challenging because, while there are many who fit the criteria, it may be difficult to find sufficient numbers of

participants to do a significant study. Advances in current internet-based survey instruments along with extensive use of social media may make this achievable.

Additional areas for useful research involve high school music teachers and their connections to, or lack thereof, community instrumental ensembles. A survey of high school teachers and their awareness of, participation in, and collaboration with community instrumental ensembles might better inform the public school music teaching profession about ways in which there could be a workable transition between school and community music. Pre-service music education students should get practical experience in connecting with community music groups so that this would be incorporated into their pedagogical practices.

Part of this suggested research should also include the many other ways in which communities outside of school make music, some in non-traditional ways. This research was limited to participation in traditional music ensembles that are similar to ensembles found in schools (concert bands, orchestras, jazz bands), but as noted in Chapter One, the term "community music" covers a much broader area than simply that of traditional ensembles. If it was found that there is a large, vibrant, and growing community music group that is very different from school music groups (for example a ukulele club), this could let music teachers know what the outside community values, which in turn might influence and expand a school's choices about what type of music education is being offered. The greater Los Angeles area has an astounding variety of community music groups. In addition to the traditional bands and orchestras already referred to there are bluegrass fiddle jam sessions (bluegrasstoday.com), Scottish fiddle groups

(scottishfiddlers.org), gay men's chorus (gmcla.com), ukulele clubs (westsideukes.com), gay and lesbian community choirs (westcoastsingers.org), gamelan groups (balibeyond.com), hip-hop open mic nights (dapoetrylounge.com), bagpipe bands (bagpiper.com), drum circles (universaldrumcircles.com), Gypsy bands (gigmasters.com), barbershop singing groups (barbershop.org), computer music sessions (beatlabacademy.com), old time fiddle groups (folkworks.org), banjo festivals (topangabanjofiddle.org), accordion groups, Beatles acoustic jam sessions, videogame music jam sessions, musical moms club, jazz jam sessions, song-writers' clubs, and others (meetup.com).

There is ample reason for music education professionals to find out what types of music experiences their students and the communities around them value.

Where This Leaves Us

Of the thousands of students participating in traditional music ensembles while in high school, only a very small percentage of them continue making music in a similar ensemble beyond their high school years. On the surface, this appears to flatly contradict one of the often-stated values of music education: that of lifelong participation. One therefore might argue that current music education practice (with its emphasis on traditional ensembles) is hopelessly out of touch with the needs and aspirations of our students, or that community ensembles which are similar to school ensembles have little relevance in modern society. While both of these sentiments may have an element of truth, a more nuanced analysis might also be considered. This research has demonstrated that there is a definite desire (might one even say *hunger*?) among former high school

musicians to keep making music in their lives. For all their shortcomings, community bands and orchestras offer an organized, highly developed pathway for accomplishing that goal. While sometimes steeped in traditional and ineffective ways of reaching the public, community instrumental ensembles are nevertheless uniquely poised to offer a meaningful musical experience for young adults, if they can find ways to be more relevant in their communities. Music teachers, sometimes also steeped in traditional ways and stifled by expectations of school administration and parents to produce first-place trophies, can support transition to post-school music making by collaboration with, and participation in, community music. The purpose of this research is to illuminate some ways in which former high school music students might realistically continue to make music outside the confines of the school environment, (and outside the established ensemble format) or "Beyond the Bell."

APPENDIX A – Focus Group Interview Questions

1. Describe your music experience (instrumental and/or vocal) from the beginning up to high school.

2. Talk about what made you want to stay in music performance classes while you were in high school.

3. What is your perception of the difficulty level of music in a community performance group? Do you think it is harder or easier than what you experienced in high school, or is it about the same? Do you think the difficulty level or the possible audition process is a concern for most people as they consider whether or not to continue playing?

4. Talk about issues that make it difficult or unappealing to participate in a community music ensemble. Issues might include the following:

- Lack of friends in community ensemble
- Costs of participation
- Negative high school or college music experience
- Time conflicts with other interests and/or responsibilities
- Lack of information about community music ensembles
- Quality/reputation of community music ensembles
- Lack of interest in the style of music played by community music groups

5. In what ways do you still engage with music? (This could include going to concerts, playing in a casual band with friends, playing in other types of music groups, singing in a choir, doing computer music, etc.)

APPENDIX B – Consent Script

(The following was read at the beginning of each focus group interview.)

Thank you all for agreeing to participate in today's focus group. The purpose of this discussion is to explore the non-participation of former high school music students in community music groups. The information gleaned from this discussion will be used in my dissertation research at Boston University. Your participation is voluntary and you may stop participating at any time. You may also choose not respond to one or more of the questions. The discussion will last about an hour and a half. I will be video recording the discussion, but the transcripts and the dissertation will not use your names or any other identifiable information. Although I will do my best to ensure that your responses are kept confidential, I cannot control what the other participants in the focus group will repeat outside of this room. If you have any questions you may ask them now or you can contact me later at my email address, which is steve@burchmusic.com. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. James Imhoff. His email address is jfimhoff@msn.com. In addition, you may obtain further information about your rights as a research subject by calling the Boston University Internal Review Board Office at 617-358-6115.

(I had all of this contact information on a flyer that was given to each participant.)

APPENDIX C – Notice Posted on Social Media Sites

Attention Former (Name of School Band or Orchestra) Musicians

You may have the opportunity to participate in a research study on young adult, former high school musicians who are no longer playing in a music group. Stephen Burch, a doctoral candidate at Boston University, College of Fine Arts, Department of Music is looking for participants for group interviews of young adults who were in school music performance for at least two years, and who currently do not play in a community band or orchestra. He is hoping to find out what are some of the issues that make it difficult for young adult musicians to keep playing after their high school years.

Stephen teaches instrumental music at Panorama High School in Van Nuys, CA. He is looking for young adults in southern California (ages 18–36) who were in a high school band or orchestra for at least two years, and who are not currently playing in a community band or orchestra. He will conduct group interviews with 4 to 6 participants in each group. The group interview sessions will each last about two hours, and will take place in his home or other convenient locations. Each participant will be asked to participate in just one group interview session. Participants will be paid $50 for their participation. Babysitting will be provided if needed.

If you are interested in participating in this important research you may contact Stephen Burch in one of the following ways:

Cell: 805.807.3272

Email: steve@burchmusic.com

APPENDIX D – Letter Sent to High School Music Teachers

Stephen Burch
5215 Laurel Park Drive
Camarillo, CA 93012
Cell: 805.807.3272
Email: steve@burchmusic.com

Date:

Dear _____,

I am a doctoral candidate at Boston University, College of Fine Arts, Department of Music. I teach instrumental music at Panorama High School in Van Nuys, CA. For my dissertation I am conducting research on young adult, former high school music students who are not currently playing in a community band or orchestra. I am hoping to find out what are some of the issues that make it difficult for young adult musicians to keep playing after their high school years.

I am looking for young adults in southern California (ages 18–36) who were in a high school band or orchestra for at least two years, and who are not currently playing in a community band or orchestra. I will conduct group interviews with 4 to 6 participants in each group. The group interview sessions will each last about two hours, and will take place in my home or other convenient locations. Each participant will be asked to participate in just one group interview session. Participants will be paid $50 for their participation. Babysitting will be provided if needed.

If you would like to help me find participants for this important research, please send the attached letter to any former students of yours who fit the criteria and might be interested in participating.

If you have any questions about my research, please feel free to contact me by phone, email or mail.

Thank you,

Stephen Burch

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Yin, R.W. (2009). *Case Study Research – Design and Methods.* (4th ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

CURRICULUM VITAE

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Education

D.M.A., Boston University, 2016

M.M., California State University, Los Angeles, 2001

B.A., Pepperdine University, 1975

Certifications / Professional Designations / Citations

California Credential, with CTEL (California Teacher of English Learners)
Single Subject: Music

National Certification, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
Music, with Orchestra emphasis

Composer Member of the American Society of Authors, Publishers, and Composers (ASCAP)

Citation by the Los Angeles Unified School District for Excellence in Music Education, 2003

Citation by the City Council of Los Angeles for Excellence in Music Education, 2004

Publications

"Can a Non-String Player Teach Strings?" *American String Teacher Magazine* August, 2000
"Developing a Studio Orchestra" *American String Teacher Magazine* June, 2001
Music published for String Orchestra, Full Orchestra, and Wind Ensemble:
Trinidad Treat, Fat Cat, Rocky's Rock, Fiddler's Hoedown, Sweet Georgia Brown (arrangement), *Into the Sky, The Fires of Anacapa Centurions* (Published by Ludwig Music)
Musical for music theater:
The Story of the Wright Brothers (Published by Encore Music)

Service to the Music Education Profession

"Arranging for Ensembles with Limited Instrumentation"
Presented to the Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association – 1998

"Music Technology in the Music Classroom"
Presented to Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) music teachers – 2004

"Music Technology in the String Classroom"
Presented to the American String Teachers Association National Conference – 2005

"TNT - Using Bach Chorales to Develop Tone, Intonation, and Technique"
Presented to LAUSD music teachers – 2006, 2015

Textbook review committee for LAUSD music textbooks – 2009

"Computer Music Applications for the Classroom"
Salary point professional development for LAUSD secondary music teachers – 2015

"Using SmartMusic and Finale in the Music Classroom"
Presented to LAUSD music teachers – 2015

"Guitar for Elementary Teachers"
Salary point professional development for LAUSD elementary teachers – 2016

Band/Orchestra Festival judge for LAUSD music festivals – 2006 to present

Teaching Experience

Venice High School, Instrumental Music
1995 to 1998

Taft High School, Instrumental Music
1998 to 2007

Part time faculty at Moorpark College:
Elements of Music, Community Orchestra, Studio Jazz Band
2005 to 2012

Panorama High School, Instrumental Music
2007 to present